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Contents

The Week 332

Editorials

Can Japan Be Stopped? 334
A Third Party Platform 335
What We Hope For 336

General Articles

The Twilight of German Capitalism ..... Michael Farbman 338
Circular Ticket ..... Bruce Bliven 340
Frank Harris on Mr. Shaw ..... Stark Young 343
What Do the Liberals Hope For? .. Edmund Wilson 345
Mr. Chase Replies ..... Stuart Chase 348
Washington Notes ..... T. R. B. 350
"Let's Build a Railroad" ..... Malcolm Cowley 351

Correspondence 352

Reviews of Books

A Drama of Mentality ..... Katharine Anthony 353
Three Books by Aldous Huxley ..... Granville Hicks and Horace Gregory 354
Women in History ..... Beulah Amidon 355
Backing into War ..... C. Hartley Grattan 355
Through Foreign Spectacles .. John Langdon-Davies 356
Book Notes 357

The Week

DESPITE all the protests of the Great Powers, Japan goes grimly ahead with her policy of trying to break the Chinese boycott by killing large numbers of Chinese, armed or unarmed, men, women and children. In the course of the action at Shanghai it seems altogether likely that foreign property in important quantities may be destroyed and foreign lives lost. This fact has brought a sudden alteration in the attitude of several countries. Great Britain, France and Italy have thus far refused to give effective backing to the American protests over the seizure of Manchuria; and their attitude has contributed to the dismal and utter futility of the League of Nations in dealing with the situation. As soon, however, as the International Settlement at Shanghai was threatened, these nations leaped into the fray. England and Italy sent warnings to Japan, and even France, which has thus far been rabidly pro-Japanese, did the same. Her protest was so feeble and so hedged the charges which have recently been widely circulated, that she has a secret alliance with Japan by which her hands are tied.

THE Disarmament Conference which opened at Geneva this week did so in an atmosphere of gloom and amid universal expectations of failure. No government wants any really important reduction of its military strength at the present time; and some of the powers would resist to the utmost any downward revision whatever. As usual, the role of chief villain in the piece is assigned to France. Some Geneva correspondents believe that she intends to lump together disarmament, Far Eastern policy and war debts, and will say to the United States: "What will you give us in the way of debt reduction, if we will promise not to increase our armament and to support the American policy in Manchuria?" Other observers believe, as we suggested above, that France has a secret understanding with Japan, aimed primarily at Soviet Russia, an understanding which makes it impossible that the French government should either reduce armament or support the American attitude in Manchuria. Amid all this pessimism there is one ray of hope: the fact that every leading government in the world today (always excepting Russia) is heading rapidly toward insolvency, and therefore cannot afford a debauch of warship building. But nations are like some improvident individuals: they are quite capable of spending money foolishly even when bankrupt. On the whole, we shall probably be lucky if the Geneva conference results in nothing worse than maintaining the status quo.

THE United States Senate this week has been discussing the La Follette-Costigan bill which would appropriate $375,000,000 from the federal treasury for the unemployed, and the debate has brought out some startling information. Senator La Follette reported that a questionnaire sent by the Senate Committee on Manufactures to a large number of cities showed that those with a total population of 9,000,000 persons believed federal relief essential, while those with an aggregate population of less than 5,000,000 were opposed. Th

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New Jersey and Connecticut—the states where reside most of the wealthy persons whose incomes are derived from industrial activity all over the country. Senator La Follette pointed out that state, county and city relief must come for the most part out of taxes on real estate and other forms of tangible property, whereas federal assistance can come from income and inheritance taxes. Local real-estate taxes have already reached, and passed, the breaking point in many cases, as is evidenced by the long lists of property being offered for sale in lieu of tax payments, with practically no buyers. How rapidly the situation is growing worse is shown by statistics as to the increase in the burden during the past year—remembering that even a year ago it was tremendously above normal. One hundred fifty-six cities reported increases during the past twelve months up to 50 percent, 115 showed increases between 50 and 100 percent, and 85, a burden more than twice as great. Twenty-three cities have no municipal-relief appropriations for 1932, not because the need does not exist, but because *they have no funds.*

TESTIMONY from other sources supplements this information. Edward F. McGrady, legislative representative of the American Federation of Labor, states that in America today there are 24,000,000 persons in "abject poverty," of whom 12,000,000 are living on public charity. He estimates that 8,300,000 workers are totally unemployed, and 7,000,000 have worked only one or two days a week. The Reverend John R. O'Grady, of the Catholic National Charities, says that federal relief is needed in every city, and that "we who have been in close contact with relief work have been amazed at the indifference of congressional leaders." As New Republic readers are aware, there are 125,000 families in New York City who are desperately in need of assistance and are not getting it; there are 600,000 persons in Chicago who have been fed at public expense from funds which are now exhausted and must be immediately replaced; and similar situations exist in scores of other cities. Typical of the indifference of congressional leaders referred to by the Reverend Mr. O'Grady is the attitude of Senator Robinson, the Democratic floor leader, who is reported in the press as suggesting that the Costigan-La Follette bill be delayed "until the situation becomes more urgent." We wonder just how many people must die of starvation-induced diseases before Senator Robinson, who eats, and eats well, every day of his life, will feel that the situation has reached the proper degree of urgency?

THE report on the psychological effects of unemployment upon family life and the individual, recently issued by the Welfare Council of New York City, will give little information to those who first hand. It does, however, contain much to interest students of American society. Nine hundred social workers, who visited 850,000 homes of the poor, report that the depression is rapidly accelerating the breakdown of family life. Constant financial insecurity, as the report points out, is the major factor, though it is often aggravated by the fact that the source of income has in innumerable instances shifted from the husband and father to the wife and children. The role of father has suffered particularly, paternal authority has diminished and though mothers, as the report sadly remarks, are spanking their children more frequently these days, it also adds that home discipline has been declining rapidly. In the case of young couples the effects of unemployment have been particularly destructive, especially when the wife has a parental home as a refuge.

THE railway unions have ended the long deadlock at Chicago by accepting a 10-percent cut in wages for a period of one year. They did so, needless to say, reluctantly, and under the pressure of a determined attempt by the railway presidents to enforce a cut of 15 percent without any time limit. The unions tried to exact a promise that the roads would put 35 percent of the saving (about $70,000,000 in the next twelve months) into relief for the unemployed; but this proposal was rejected, the roads agreeing only that they would do what they could to give employment to their own former employees. No well informed person believes that a saving of $200,000,000 a year on the wages of 1,500,000 men will get the railroads out of their troubles. Some of the weaker ones will still go into receivership; and some of the stronger will profit by a sacrifice which in their cases need not have been made. (It is well to remember that, broadly speaking, many of the weak roads are heavily overcapitalized, the watered stock having been foisted off on the public.) It is probably true that the leaders of the unions saw no alternative to accepting the cut. We hope it is also true that they now realize the folly of trying to get wise, concerted action for the benefit of labor, the public and the country as a whole from a group of men whose one idea is, not to operate the roads well but to extract from the process of operation the largest possible profits.

WOODROW WILSON was reëlected on the slogan, "He kept us out of war," and we entered the War one month after he was inaugurated. Herbert Hoover was elected on the slogan, "Less government in business," and during his entire term has been putting the government deeper into business, to an accompaniment of howls from his followers, not because they object to this, but because they want the process to go farther and faster. The government is about to invest two billion dollars in a variety of private businesses,

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Agriculture is lending money to needy farmers as though it were a bank. The Federal Farm Board has lost many millions of dollars in transactions which amounted to playing the grain and cotton markets. The Glass Bill proposes a largely increased degree of government control over banking, and some at least of its provisions are certain to be enacted into law. The Postal Savings banks—a genuine case of government ownership and operation—are likely in the near future to be increased in scope and importance. We forbear to add to this list the current tariff law, the most terrific governmental interference with the normal course of private business seen in a century, the subventions to aviation and the mercantile marine, and other similar expedients. We would merely ask politely: What price private initiative and rugged individualism now?

WHEN Robert E. Burns was arrested in Chicago not long ago and sent back to the Georgia chain gang from which he had escaped seven years previously, his case received a vast amount of publicity in the daily press. Demands were made that he be pardoned, on the ground that he had expiated the minor crime of which he had been convicted and that his successful career as a magazine editor in Chicago had proved his worth as an honest and upright citizen. In spite of all the protests raised in his behalf, he was again placed in the chain gang. However, he again succeeded in escaping and has now written an account of his experiences in a book bearing the somewhat lurid title, "I am a Fugitive from a Georgia Chain Gang" (Vanguard). In it he describes a system of such utter brutality and terror that if one were not certain it was written by a living man one would believe that it described the penal system of medieval Russia. It is a description of a system which seems to have been invented for the sole purpose of giving sadists an opportunity to practise their vice. It is a description of lashings, of starved men working without respite under the broiling sun, of punishments that rival those of the Inquisition. The book testifies, in fact—if the author tells the truth, as there is every reason to believe that he does—to the validity of all the charges that have been brought against the chain gangs of the South.

READERS of The New Republic will perhaps remember the brutal murder of Mike Phillipovitch, father of five children, who was shot down on the front porch of his store during the strike against the Pittsburgh Coal Company in Arnold City, Pennsylvania, last summer. Phillipovitch's only crime appears to have been that he was in sympathy with the strike and that his store had been used as a meeting place for the National Miners' Union; at the time of his murder he was unarmed and had offered no resistance to the nine sheriff's deputies and members of the coal and iron police in Mexico and Nicaragua. This should prevent us solved of any criminal responsibility at the coroner's inquest, but it is now reported that the new district attorney of Fayette County, who came into office on an independent ticket on January 4, has issued orders charging the nine men with murder on evidence "which was available, but not used" at the inquest. Among the nine whom the district attorney is holding is a superintendent of the Pittsburgh Coal Company. Though we shall be surprised if the deputies and police who shot down Phillipovitch are ever convicted, even if tried, it is at least refreshing to learn that someone in authority in the coal regions believes that striking miners are not the only human beings capable of violence and murder.

Can Japan Be Stopped?

WHEN A hostile force lands in a foreign country, drops bombs from airplanes on a city crowded with civilians, sets fires, and goes through the streets shooting rifles and machine guns, it is difficult for persons with civilized dispositions to keep their heads. Yet, discounting as far as we may the flare of indignation which behavior of this kind is bound to arouse, our considered opinion is that Japan, by her acts in Manchuria, Shanghai and other parts of China, is guilty of aggression, of violating solemn treaties and promises, in a sense far more clear and less likely to be revised by the subsequent judgment of historians than was Germany when she invaded Belgium in 1914. In addition to the injury she has done to the concerted efforts of the rest of the world to maintain the sanctity of international obligations and prevent war, she has in Shanghai placed many Americans and Europeans in imminent danger of their lives. It would be difficult to match for cool effrontery the position of the Japanese government, which first used the International Settlement as a base for military operations against the native population, and then warned the other powers that unless the Chinese military forces were kept back of a broad neutral zone a counter-attack might endanger the nationals of these powers in the International Settlement. For any loss of American lives or damage to American property in Shanghai, no matter how it now may occur, Japan must be held directly responsible.

It is true that the Japanese have done the sort of thing in China which other powers have previously done there, that none of the other nations can with clean hands protest against the violation of Chinese integrity. It is true that the Japanese have had provocation. It is true that under similar types of provocation, and when no stable government existed in the areas where the provocation occured, other nations have landed marines and expeditionary forces—as the United States has done

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any superior national morality of our own. But it does not excuse the action of Japan, nor should it forestall vigorous objection to it on the part of those who have consistently objected to the same kind of behavior, no matter what government has indulged in it.

If peace is ever to be safeguarded, this sort of action must stop sometime. That fact has been recognized in the treaties under which the nations have mutually agreed that the settlement of international disputes may no longer be sought by forcible means. Under these treaties provocation, no matter how great, cannot be made the excuse for military action. It is perfectly clear, when one compares with the course of events the notes exchanged between the Japanese government on the one hand and the League of Nations and the United States on the other, that Japan has been aiming, not merely to police disturbed territory near the zones in which her soldiers may legally be, but to exercise military pressure in order to gain her ends in Manchuria. And it is perfectly clear that the present attacks upon great cities in China proper is a calculated use of frightfulness in an attempt to force the Chinese to end their boycott of Japanese goods. The more clearly this fact, and explicit disapproval of it, can be registered by the other nations in their concerted judgments, the better. The United States has already stated that it will not recognize the validity of any settlement imposed upon China by force of arms, and we hope that this decision will be resolutely adhered to.

What further is there to do about it? The first duty is that which our government has apparently begun vigorously to pursue—to get our citizens in China out of harm's way as rapidly as possible. We hope that those charged with this duty have rigid instructions to avoid any embarrassing incident which may further inflame emotions. We have no interest in the Far East which justifies the sacrifice of a single American, Chinese or Japanese life. It would be intolerable to do anything which might lead to hostilities in the protection of national interests there. We hope not only that we get out of China but that we stay out until we are ready to go back at the invitation of a Chinese government, to live under Chinese laws and to submit to Chinese courts.

There remains the question what can be done about Japan's violation of her pledges and her threat to the peace of the world. Admitting that she has outlawed herself, that she is a guilty nation, the world's experience in attempting to serve the future of peace by punishing a "guilty nation" in 1914 and thereafter does not lead us to advocate a repetition of the enterprise. The New Republic has consistently opposed the principle of military sanctions; you cannot have peace by substituting a world war for a two-party conflict. It would be folly in any event to attempt to fight Japan at the other side of the Pacific. And the same logic applies to those participating, if they are effective at all, they would be almost indistinguishable from war; they would bring unemployment, starvation and collapse upon all concerned. It is scarcely conceivable that they could be enforced without blockades and reprisals which would soon lead to military measures themselves.

Peace will not come until the several nations understand that their interests are best served by peace, that they can gain nothing worth having by conquest and imperialism. Japan, even if she does not meet effective military opposition by China or any other nation, is bound to have a costly lesson of this sort enforced upon her by the action of her own militarists in the present instance. Her economy is such that she cannot sustain her population except by an extension of her international trade in a peaceful world, except by limiting her budget and avoiding the extravagance of large military and naval commitments. The military have long contended that, by controlling Manchuria and using force against the Chinese, they can aid the prosperity of Japan and end the boycott. This is pure madness. The Japanese people cannot colonize Manchuria in competition with the Chinese; they cannot gain any benefits from the limited natural resources of Manchuria under their own rule which they could not gain under a native government. Some Japanese may make more profit from this procedure, but the Japanese masses will not get any more food and clothing from it. Japan cannot keep armies in China forever to force the Chinese to buy Japanese goods at the point of the bayonet. They cannot borrow abroad to finance any such insane policy. The most significant news of the day is the precipitous drop in prices of Japanese bonds and the closing of the stock exchange in Tokio. This foreshadows the economic disaster which the present policy invites. Isolated by world opinion, and with no enemy to use as a scapegoat, the military party which controls the Japanese government should be left to reap the whirlwind which it has sown.

A Third Party Platform

THE LEAGUE for Independent Political Action has made public a document which is offered as the possible platform for a third party in the presidential campaign of 1932. The product of more than a hundred economists, political and labor leaders, social-welfare workers and agricultural experts, it was written by a series of committees each of which dealt with one subject or related group of subjects. It is divided into seven sections and contains eighty-four specific recommendations on domestic or foreign questions.

In the present crisis, the League recommends an immediate expenditure of $250,000,000 or more from federal funds for the relief of the unem-

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three to five billion dollars for public works, the money to come from larger income and inheritance taxes. These would be raised to a maximum, in the higher brackets, of 75 percent. It demands federal aid for state unemployment insurance and old-age and mothers' pensions. Free labor exchanges would be set up, and the rights of labor protected by various other pieces of legislation, some of them to be obtained after enactment of a "labor amendment" to the federal Constitution. It is proposed, indeed, to call a constitutional convention at once for the purpose of rewriting that document, and the suggestion is made that a similar revision ought to be undertaken every twenty-five years. One of the immediate purposes would be a new amendment to settle the prohibition question, by permitting each state to deal with it according to the wishes of its own citizens.

The platform calls for an immediate 25-percent reduction of the tariff, and complete free trade in twenty years. It asks "eventual" public ownership and operation of power and other public utilities, as well as railroads, coal mines and oil wells. An international economic conference is asked, for the purpose of "readjusting" reparations and war debts, and a permanent worldwide economic congress is proposed which would seek to regularize international trade and investment. The document recommends eventual membership in the League of Nations, and coöperation henceforth in all its "non-military" activities. It would have American military and naval expeditures reduced 50 percent at once, as a step toward "the rapid abolition of armaments altogether," and provides that war should not be declared until after a national referendum. It recommends entrance into the World Court, the recognition of Soviet Russia, freedom for the Philippines, the abandonment of our imperialistic policy toward Latin America.

Other domestic recommendations include the reorganization of the banking system, a series of aids to agriculture, limits on speculation, an affirmation of the right to freedom of speech and of the press, direct election of the President, and numerous corollary proposals.

There are at least three things which need to be said about these eighty-four recommendations, nearly all of which are familiar to New Republic readers, and most of which have long had the endorsement of its editors. First of all, of course, desirable as it would be to have a national administration elected on this platform, there is no hope whatever that this will happen in 1932. This election will be won by the Republicans or the Democrats, and neither party will come within a thousand miles of satisfying the demands of those who have sponsored the program outlined above.

In the second place, since this platform is purely for educational purposes, we regret that it was not built around a central, unifying idea which would give it coherence and [illegible]

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fundamental philosophy which is more than a mere negation of present tendencies, a desire to look backward to the conditions of a generation or so ago. Specifically, we think that the idea of a planned national economy is more important than any of the various manifestations of it which, by implication, are recommended in some of these planks.

It is interesting, in the third place, to note that with the exception of the planks on international affairs, this platform is in the main an attempt to bring the United States up to the level which was attained some years ago in several European countries, and notably in Great Britain and Germany. Few of the outstanding demands in the domestic field ask anything which does not already exist in substance in one or another of these countries, or in several of them at once. These steps must be taken by the United States, in one way or another, and agitation for them is an extremely useful social enterprise; but it is a sobering thought that the countries which have already taken them are far from being satisfied with the results, and are now looking ahead to even more drastic and comprehensive changes, in the direction of restricting private enterprise and abolishing, or drastically curtailing, the profit motive in production. The platform of the League for Independent Political Action, it is well to remember, would not take us into Utopia. If European experience is a fair guide, it would do no more than bring us to the gates of the happy land.

What We Hope For

THERE is a passage in Edmund Wilson's article, "What Do the Liberals Hope For?" on page 345 of this issue of The New Republic, which expresses an idea that must have bothered many who have been interested in the suggestions for national economic planning. The liberals, he says, "draw up schemes for 'planned economies' which are designed to preserve the capitalist system while eliminating some of its worst features—though so far as one can tell from what they write, they haven't the ghost of an idea of an agency to put even these into effect." Even if such an attempt were to be made under our existing political system, he goes on to argue, it would be the capitalists who would do the planning, and they would plan merely to save their own skins. The inference appears to be that the only sound course is to cease talking abont planning except in connection with a movement for accession to power by the workers.

This passage, however it was intended, is not an apt description of the attitude of The New Republic or of the kind of planning it urges. In the first place, we are not liberals. On numerous occasions we have pointed out the meaninglessness.

ism and the self-contradictory nature of what is known as the liberal philosophy. Liberalism in economics and politics is historically associated with laissez-faire, which is the exact opposite of social planning and control. In the second place, the planning we have recommended is not designed to preserve the capitalist system. It is designed to hasten the alteration of capitalism in the direction of an economy efficiently serving social purposes.

There is no such thing as "the capitalist system" anyway. Capitalism is by nature unsystematic, because it is individualistic and competitive and predatory. Chaos is of its essence. We have not had pure capitalism for decades, even if we ever had it outside the ideas of laissez-faire economists. Every step toward regulating, checking or eliminating private enterprise—and there have been many—is a step away from capitalism. The steps so made in the United States in the past have not done much good; they have in many respects increased confusion. But this is because they were made as separate concessions to exigency, without abandoning the ideas of liberal economics or visualizing the necessity of comprehensive planning, of the correlation of controls about broad social objectives. Many talk as if "capitalism" were one complete system and "socialism" were another, and as if there were no possibility of change except to jump from the pure conceptual form of the one to the pure conceptual form of the other with a sharp click. This talk is exceedingly naïve. The agitation for national economic planning is, of course, not an agitation for the preservation of capitalism, but a movement toward an eventually socialized society, no matter what terminology may be used in describing it.

This being the case, then, how can we expect capitalists to put national economic planning into effect? The answer is, we do not. We think they may possibly try, but we doubt if they will try in such a way as to accomplish much for the good of society. We have made it abundantly clear that the kind of national planning we favor cannot even be begun except by giving large scope of direction to governmental agencies, manned by experts who are not representatives of the capitalists but of the public interest, and seeking goals which are social in nature. We have also said on numerous occasions that we do not see how the job can be done without strong organization of labor. With these agencies in existence, we should be willing to give the present owners and managers of industry a chance to coöperate in achieving the ends decided upon. If they proved incapable or unwilling to adopt the essential measures, we should want to go as far as was necessary in substituting the power of the public for the power of private owners. Those who believe that private ownership of productive property must be completely abolished before planning can succeed cannot logically object right, it will prove this in a demonstration far more convincing to the nation than the arguments of a hundred thousand street-corner orators.

Next, it may be asked how we are going to get a President and Congress who will set up a body of experts really devoted to the goals in question. We are convinced that we cannot do so through the existing Republican and Democratic parties. We have been convinced of this for years. We await the birth of a sufficiently powerful political movement devoted to social planning. We think the wage earners and the dirt farmers must be an important part of this movement. We also think it can win many recruits from other elements in society who suffer, not only in a material way but in other ways, from a disordered economy. Just how such a movement will arise it is difficult at this moment to foresee. But this is a kind of difficulty which we share with Mr. Wilson and all others who want far-reaching changes. Our hats will be off to Norman Thomas or William Z. Foster or anybody else who can really erect a political power of a kind which will inaugurate social economic planning on a national scale.

In the meantime, we respectfully submit that one of the best services to the formation of such a movement which can be rendered by writers like Mr. Wilson, Mr. Beard, Mr. Chase, Mr. Steffens or our humble selves is to explore the possibilities of a planned economy, to broaden the understanding of its necessity and possibilities, to show, with all the specification and ingenuity which we can muster, how the failures and frustrations of existing society arise from its lack. Our modest knowledge of history does not teach us that the shaping of new and relevant ideas and habits of thought is completely futile in effecting social change, even if it is impossible to predict with complete assurance what agencies will embody the ideas or how they will take root. And we believe that future historians will identify this age, not with any exclusive cult or school, but with the breaking down of social planlessness, and with a drift, clumsy, gargantuan and made up of many confused elements, toward a planned society.

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The Twilight of German Capitalism

THE FACT that the political and economic deadlock in Germany synchronizes with a worldwide depression and that the two crises have many features in common will not blind the intelligent observer to the striking peculiarities of the German situation. The difference between the two crises may be approximately defined as follows: in the rest of the world, a return to normality will be the probable solution, while in Germany such a solution is utterly unthinkable. The German crisis, indeed, constitutes not the interruption but the end of yesterday's normality; is the conclusion of an epoch and the beginning of another. All Germany is, as it were, committed to and in expectation of a change; and many Germans believe that the change has actually taken place and that the only thing lacking is the consciousness of it.

The disruption of the bourgeois parties, the growth of Communism, the dramatic electoral triumphs of the National Socialists, the radicalization of opinion on both Right and Left, are all outward signs of the revolt of the middle classes and proclaim the emergence of a new spirit in Germany. But the change is deeper than these indications would suggest. The essential difference between the German and the world crisis is this, that, whereas the latter, however severe, is a crisis which is not repugnant to capitalism, the former is one which seems to threaten its very existence. The outside world is growing more and more accustomed to the idea that the financial collapse of Germany is imminent and that the country is on the verge of bankruptcy. But the world fails to perceive that the collapse, when it comes, will be more catastrophic than this, involving the complete downfall of the capitalist system.

That the situation in Germany has entered on a revolutionary stage cannot escape the notice of anyone who studies the plain economic facts. The growth of unemployment, the decline of production, the increase of bankruptcy and insolvency and the closing down of big factories and works are all eloquent signs of the dissolution of the existing order. Moreover, the shock of this economic decline has been accentuated by the disclosure of a marked degeneration of commercial morality. Never in the history of capitalism have there been scandals so numerous, so blatant, so criminal, involving such colossal sums of money and implicating so many seemingly solid institutions and individuals, industrialists, bankers and politicians.

These sets of facts are enough to prove the crumbling character of German capitalism. But the desperate efforts which the Ministers are making to shore up the structure are probably even more significant. The emergency legislation of the Reich and the Prussian government furnishes in itself the clearest indication of the profundity of the crisis. Many of the provisions of these decrees outline measures which, though eclectic and mere expedients, are more sweeping and revolutionary in character than any socialist government, outside Russia, has so far attempted to introduce. But in the latest of these decrees—"the Fourth Emergency Decree for the Safeguarding of National Economy and Finance and for the Protection of Internal Peace"—issued on December 8, Dr. Brüning has forsworn half-measures and has boldly infringed some of the basic features of the capitalist system.

It must not be assumed, however, that in violating the sanctity of contracts and in decreeing the reduction of prices, Dr. Brüning and his advisers have conceived any deliberate intention of betraying the capitalist cause. On the contrary, it is well known that up to the last moment the Chancellor refused to entertain the idea of interfering with the rate of interest. The idea of a compulsory conversion of interest was first launched in November last at the meetings of the Advisory Economic Council. Rumors of the idea aroused such a storm of protest in the press that Dr. Brüning publicly denounced them (in a speech at Mainz, November 13) as the products of sensationalism, and solemnly declared that the government would not even consider "such dangerous and abominable measures." Yet, at the very time that he was thus reassuring public opinion, the Prussian government proclaimed a moratorium for all debts incurred by the landlords and farmers of East Germany, a decree permeated by the very spirit which the Chancellor had denounced.

That the landlords and farmers are in a desperate position as a result of the fall in agricultural prices and are heavily in debt is well known. The Prussian government has for years been attempting to relieve their position, partly by subventions, that is, at the direct expense of the taxpayer, partly at his indirect expense, that is, by raising the prices of agricultural produce and by imposing high protective tariffs. But the relief afforded by this moratorium is obviously of a very different character, given as it is entirely at the expense of the creditors. The *"Ost-hilfe"* constitutes nothing less than a kind of compulsory and state-protected bankruptcy of the landowning classes. It violates both the principle and the practice of the capitalist system; and the only defense which the Minister responsible for the working of the moratorium, Herr Schlauge-Schoeniagen, can make for it is a declaration of its inevitability.

Indeed, the object which the Chancellor had in

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view in issuing this emergency decree is best expressed in the popular German phrase "to make Germany a cheaper country"—that is, to produce cheaper. This urge toward cheaper production and the development of the export trade has been for years the dominating aim of Germany. The tremendous work of overhauling and rationalizing German industries that was carried through so assiduously in the post-war period, was largely dictated by the country's determination to increase her exports to the utmost possible extent. The fulfilment of the reparations clauses of the Versailles Treaty depended on this; and, although the burden involved in such fulfilment was palpably too onerous, it was borne with a certain resignation because it at once stimulated and justified the utmost efforts to increase and so to cheapen production.

Now, in retrospect, it is fair to say that the Young Plan was accepted in Germany in something of an optimistic spirit. The working off of the country's obligations was envisaged in the atmosphere of an ever expanding volume of world trade, of which Germany would take her due share. This prospect proved a mirage. World trade, instead of expanding, contracted. In 1930 it was 18 percent lower than in 1929; while in 1931 it was 28 percent lower than in 1930. German trade, too, shared in this decline. Compared with other leading countries, Germany perhaps did not do so badly. Considered indeed as a proportion of world trade, Germany's share became even slightly bigger. But her *volume* of trade declined over 30 percent. In 1929 her imports per head of the population amounted to 17.5 Reich marks. In 1931 they fell to 7.4. In 1929 her exports per head of the population amounted to 17.6 Reich marks. In 1931 they fell to 11.6.

These figures, registering as they did a striking decline, were at once recognized as danger signals. The whole conception of her ability to pay reparations was based on Germany's deep belief in the possibility of an assured and indeed unlimited expansion of the export trade. The realization that this conception was ill founded came as a great shock to the German people, who, however, were persuaded by their economists and business men that the decline was not organic and permanent but susceptible of alleviation. Declaring that the cause was the increased competition of other industrial countries and their high protective tariffs, these advisers engaged in a furious propaganda in favor of a cutting down of costs. This demand for a reduction in wages became especially insistent and almost hysterical when Great Britain abandoned the gold standard and thereby obtained, incidentally, a premium on her exports.

During October and November of last year the propaganda for cutting wages became so clamant and irrepressible that the only question left to be settled was how to effect these cuts and how drastic of some sort of reduction of wages; but like the statesman he is, he made an attempt to obtain this reduction by the consent of the workers. Moreover, his policy was not to cut wages in the confident expectation that the economic life of the nation would automatically adjust itself to this new standard, but to obtain such an adjustment by an active intervention in economic conditions. As I have already declared, he wanted not only a reduction in the cost of production, but in the cost of living. He wanted in fact to square the circle. He wanted an all-round "cheaper Germany." In his search for this queer sort of Utopia—the reduction of wages and salaries without a corresponding reduction of the purchasing power of the people, the Chancellor found himself caught in a chain of inexorable logic which compelled him in the end to violate some of the most fundamental principles of the existing economic order.

To compensate the workers for the cuts in their wages, prices had to be forced down. Goods, rents, railway fares, street-car fares, all had to be lower. It was comparatively easy to make a cut in transport prices; but the reduction of rents created a difficult and delicate problem. German houseowners were notoriously in no position to sustain this loss; while the government, which only two months before had been compelled to reduce the property tax 50 percent, had no means by which it could alleviate the householders' plight. A deadlock arose. Some way of compensating houseowners had to be discovered. Some victim had to be found. And a victim was found in the mortgageholder, who was summarily deprived of half his gains.

Dr. Brüning's decree of December 8, 1931, will eventually be recognized as one of the landmarks in German history. It established in the most dramatic fashion the principle of state interference with economic relations.

The main purpose of the famous decree, the strengthening of Germany's position in the world market, was defeated even before it was promulgated. The fresh decline in the volume of exports, which began in November, obviously could not be arrested by the decree. But the figures for December reveal a still further decline, and the prospects for 1932 are, so the experts say, definitely discouraging. It has at last dawned on German consciousness that the sanguine hopes of a fabulously extensive export trade are unattainable and that this is so, not because Germany is a dear country—this of course is a pure fallacy—but because the whole conception of production solely for export and for the working off of a whole generation's obligations is radically utopian and false. The myth of a renaissance of Germany through unlimited exports has now been finally exploded.

The economic consequence of reparations was to make Germany the workshop and the storehouse

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test against being placed in this situation "of economic servitude." But she eventually resigned herself to it and took full advantage of it, with the result that she now owes Europe and America nearly 30,000 million marks, the greater part of which has been spent in reconditioning her industry for the accomplishment of an absolutely impossible task. Now that the task has had to be finally abandoned, she is confronted once more with the invidious necessity of overhauling her economic life from top to bottom, no longer with the intention of swamping the world markets with her goods but with a view of raising the standard of living of her own people.

As a sheer piece of statecraft, Dr. Brüning's decree of December 8 was a stroke of genius. It took the wind out of the sails of the extreme parties by borrowing items from their respective programs. The Social Democrats, the bourgeois parties, the National Socialists, all damned it for some of its provisions but applauded it for others. The one provision that came in for most attack and for most praise was the reduction of the rate of interest. The essence of the bourgeois criticism of this provision was that it struck a fatal blow at the foundations of capitalism. "The capitalist economic order," declared Dr. Gustav Stolper, the editor of Der Deutsche Volkswirt, "is based on the free operation of price and of interest. When these two categories have fallen into the direct dictation of the State, German capitalism has ceased to exist."

The fact that this infringement is merely provisional and is described as emergency legislation does little to diminish its intrinsic importance. Long after the decree of December 8 has been forgotten, its effects will be felt in Germany. With the issuance of this decree the principle of state interference in economic relations has been asserted and established in the most dramatic fashion and has been accepted as a welcome relief by millions of destitute Germans. There can be no doubt that the German middle classes are enthusiastic in their approval of this new economic dictatorship and that its promulgation has immensely strengthened Dr. Brüning's political position in the country. It is plain, however, that the Chancellor cannot afford to rest on his laurels. The famous decree is only the first step toward some kind of state capitalism, the vogue for which promises to be increasingly popular in Germany. The electoral successes of the National Socialists are due largely to their opposition to liberal theories of laissez-faire and to their readiness to support a bold program of state capitalism. Dr. Brüning cannot afford to exclude them from his reckoning.

Political thought in Germany, however, is still amorphous and has yet to crystallize itself. The frontiers separating parties are vague and unmapped; and it is extremely difficult to define not only the difference between parties but the principles on which one or another is united. The Nazis represent the aspirations toward state assistance of a middle class which is being pressed down to the economic level of the proletariat but still clings desperately to its old social and cultural standards. This class feels that its only chance of survival is to obtain the protection of the state. And that is why ideas of state capitalism are so popular in Germany today, and why there is such an impatient and such a revolutionary tension in the country. The middle classes must either sink to the level of the masses or help that party to power which promises them salvation.

MICHAEL FARBMAN.

Circular Ticket

Wayside Notes of a European Tour

AT SEA

ALL DRESSED UP.—The ship on which I am crossing the Atlantic might play the part of Modern Capitalism in an allegory. It is one of the newest, fastest and largest vessels in the world. It has every recent device for safety and convenience; the design and decoration of its public rooms are so lovely that it is hard to think of anything else while in them; the cuisine is unbelievable (there were ninety-three dishes on this morning's breakfast menu); the engine rooms, which I have just examined, are like some Utopian's dream of the year 2000. We rush forward steadily and smoothly through an angry sea, in daylight and dark, protected by gyroscopic compass, anti-roll devices, waterproof compartments with automatic electric doors. The ship is equipped to carry 1,700 passengers and she has on this voyage about 160. Coming to lunch a little early yesterday, I ate most of it quite alone in a room nobler than any Roman Caesar ever saw, under the watchful but saddened eyes of 115 waiters. In fact, this marvelous ship as it rushes forward on its course can hardly be doing so at a loss to its owners of less than a hundred dollars a mile. It is perhaps not surprising that despite her wonderful system of ventilators, there should nevertheless blow now and then through her structure just the faintest odor of the tomb.

I suggest to Mr. Stuart Chase, as a codicil to his book on "The Tragedy of Waste," a study of the

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main salon of the vessel has thirty-five small tables scattered through it; on each there is an ash tray, and beside each tray is a little book of twenty paper matches, with the insignia of the line printed on its cover. If you enter the salon after breakfast, each table is equipped with a new match-book; and when you come at lunch time, you find that every book from which so much as one match has been taken has disappeared and a fresh new one is in its place. At tea time the same thing happens, and also after dinner. One hundred and forty match-books a day, in this one room; and on the average, I suppose that five matches are used from each book. What becomes of the other fifteen, which add up into 12,600 matches for every voyage? So far as I can judge, they are sacrificed on the altar of competition. And we have come a long way from the naked savage in the jungle rotating one dry stick against another.

BERLIN

The Yellow Metal.—In a world where currencies are toppling and no sort of paper obligation any longer has secure validity, gold has come to have an even higher rating than in the past; and this fact has been made the basis of a confidence game which is worked on unsuspecting tourists (and sometimes natives as well) in the streets of Berlin. It was tried on me as I walked along Unter den Linden one sunny morning. A young man stopped me and asked (in English, after a glance at my shoes) where was the White Russian Embassy, please? I ought to have told him that I didn't know, and passed on; but I am an only partly reformed college professor and so I explained to him that there is no such thing in Berlin, that there is only the Embassy of the U.S.S.R. He insisted that he was sure the Whites also have diplomatic representation, and so, with a shrug of the shoulders, I suggested that he ask some German citizen. He stopped one, seemingly quite at random, in the passing throng, and only then explained to me that he was a Russian, spoke no German, and would have to have an interpreter. With confusion over the bad quality of my German, I put his question to the citizen who had stood waiting quietly, and the following dialogue ensued:

THE GERMAN: It's around the corner to the right, first street after you reach the Königsplatz. Ask him what he wants there.

THE RUSSIAN (after translation): I am an anti-Bolshevist. I just escaped from Russia and am going to Canada. I have gold rubles—old, Tsarist rubles, and I must exchange them for German marks to buy my steamship ticket.

THE GERMAN (after translation): You say he has gold? I'll buy his gold rubles! How much does he want for them?

THE RUSSIAN (after translation): I have many gold rubles—hundreds. I will sell them, one ruble

MYSELF (in a good-hearted American way): That's ridiculous! A gold ruble is worth at least two paper marks.

THE RUSSIAN: Well, that's what I was told to ask.

When this was translated to the German, he gave every evidence of being wildly excited. He reached in his pocket, drew out a twenty-mark note, and offered it to the Russian. The latter in turn drew out what looked like three lovely, shining gold pieces, one of them supposedly for ten rubles, and two for five rubles each, and gave them to the German for his paper.

THE GERMAN (looking at me with just a shade of impatience): This Russian is crazy! He exchanges one ruble for one mark, and a gold ruble is worth two marks. I would buy more, many more, if I only had the extra money on me, but alas, I left home this morning with but twenty marks. It is the opportunity of a lifetime.

The Russian also looked at me, with something of sadness, and a great light dawned. "Gentlemen," I said in English, which I am confident they both understood, "you are now in the presence of a former police-court reporter on an American newspaper. He may be a little slow-witted, but he finally wakes up. I now bid you good morning."

I walked around the corner into the Friedrichstrasse, meditating on the impudence of confidence men who make their victim act as interpreter for them. As I rounded the corner a young man stepped forward, with a swift glance at my American shoes. "I beg your pardon," he said in English, "but could you direct me to the White Russian Embassy?" . . .

How much money has been lost in the past few months by persons who have bought these handsome (doubtless brass) rubles, no one knows; but I was told in what should have been authoritative quarters that it undoubtedly ran into hundreds of thousands of dollars in Berlin alone, and that the same trick, or some variation of it, is being worked in many other cities.

MOSCOW

Old Russia Still Survives.—The Soviet government has done a great deal toward changing human nature, despite the popular theory that this cannot be done. Yet Russia is a large and stubborn country, and these things take time. I was reminded of this fact, in a Russian city which I think had better be nameless, by my experience with The Waiter and the Caviar. A foreigner, unaccustomed to the Russian food of today, learns to lean rather heavily on caviar, which is now reasonably plentiful and, under certain conditions, not prohibitively expensive. In this city I was living on the American plan at a leading hotel, under an arrangement by which I was entitled to caviar with both dinner (5 p. m.) and supper (11 p. m. and far, far into the night.)

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and was served by the same waiter, an amiable middle-aged man who spoke a little of what he proudly imagined was German. For four or five days he served me caviar twice daily, without comment; and then one day I came in for dinner, ordered the dish as usual, and ran into an obstacle.

"Excuse me," he said. "Caviar is an extra in this hotel. You must order it à la carte. Large portion, twelve dollars. Small portion, eight dollars. Which would you like?"

"I wouldn't like either," I explained patiently. "I am paying a lump sum per day, and it includes caviar twice a day with my meals. Don't you remember? You've served me yourself, day after day. Every day. Twice a day."

My words had no effect. "Twelve dollars for large portion," he repeated hopefully. "Eight dollars for small."

"Before I was in this city," I went on, "I was in (let us call it) Danyetgrad. Same arrangement there. Caviar twice a day. Included in bill."

His face lighted up. "Ah, ah, ah," he breathed. "In Danyetgrad, yes. Caviar free, with meals, yes. Here no. Large portion, twelve doll—"

"All right, all right," I said. "No caviar. Bring me some soup."

At my next meal I again sat at the same table, was served by the same man. I gave him my order: "Bring me some caviar, first." He brought it, sweetly and without a word. And all meals thereafter. Puzzled, I told the story to a Russian friend, who gave me the key to the mystery. "Don't you see?" said my friend. "That one meal, there didn't happen to be any caviar in the house. And he didn't want to confess this to you, a foreigner."

Communism, or the Eighteen-fifties? — People are fond of saying that what is happening in Russia is not so much an experiment in socialized economy, as it is a pioneering project in developing the resources of a country which has heretofore been incredibly backward. Russia, they say, is just like the United States during the expansion to the West, in the eighteen-forties and fifties.

But this statement is pretty obviously a dangerous half-truth. The industrialization which is going on in Russia is a process which certainly would not need to accompany the setting up of a Socialist state in Germany or the United States; and a great deal of it is done under conditions which approximate more closely to state socialism than to pure Communism. It is doubtless true that much of the present enthusiasm in Russia for the Five Year Plan is just the normal human pleasure in building things, in beating someone else (in this case, the United States, which the Russians are convinced they will "overtake and surpass" in about 1938). But: the Russian admiration for their own physical achievements is inextricably intertwined with Socialist zeal. They admire a new factory, not only because it is new, and is, perhaps, the largest in the world, but because it is a people's factory, it belongs to all of them, the things it makes will contribute to the building of the first workers' state in the world. Remember, too, that out of the schools, and out of the Red Army which is also a school, there come pouring every year hundreds of thousands of young people who, since they were two or three years old, have lived in a Socialist republic, have never known anything else, would be as bewildered if set down in a country devoted to private capitalism as a young American would be if turned loose in Moscow. In a few years' time they will constitute a majority of the population; and then the analogy with the America of seventy-five years ago will be more than ever inept.

It is also worth remembering that private capitalism has never, in any country, done a job one-half so good from the standpoint of social engineering as that which is being done in the U.S.S.R. today. The building of railroads, creation of towns, development of factories, in America during the supposedly comparable period was an incredibly botched job. We built too many railroads, built them in the wrong places, duplicated facilities needlessly. Our towns are being strangled to death by the bad city planning done then. It is also, I think, pretty apparent that no capitalistic country ever would, or could, do a job comparable to Russia's in size and speed.

Lenin and Peter the Great.—In Leningrad I discovered something which no one, to my knowledge, has ever mentioned: namely, that Lenin and Peter the Great started their careers just across the street from each other. When Lenin came back to Russia in 1917, he first stayed in the house of a former mistress of the Tsar, and made his speeches from a corner of her garden. Any good left-fielder could throw a baseball from that point to the little wooden hut which was the earliest dwelling place of Peter when he founded the city. This trivial fact seems to me not without significance; for I believe that they were more alike than most Russians would care to admit. Lenin would have thoroughly understood old Peter, with his vision of a new Russia taking her place among the great nations of the world; and Peter, if he were alive today, would, I am sure, be rooting mightily for the success of the Second Five Year Plan.

And Anywhere Else.—Those who complain that what is happening in the U.S.S.R. is just the frenzied devotion of a child to its building blocks usually add: "Oh, it may work in Russia, but it certainly wouldn't do so anywhere else." After spending some little time here, I rise to remark with no malice whatever that if it works in Russia *at all,* if it succeeds even 60 or 70 percent, with the handicaps, human and physical, which are here encountered, then there is every reason to believe that anywhere else in the Occident it would be a grand and glorious, a shining success.

BRUCE BLIVEN.

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Frank Harris on Mr. Shaw

I MAKE no pretense of being a Shaw student. I was first introduced to his work by two ladies at a dinner table, one a lady of forty-five, perhaps, who had been going to bed every night at nine o'clock for six months so that her husband's spies could have nothing on her, and now that she had her divorce had come over to London to make up for it all; and the other a beautiful American, the mistress of the very smart paying-guest house where by pure chance I lodged, who had broken her engagement with a millionaire at home to marry a European singing teacher—at the time she was throwing his shoes into the hall and locking him out of their room because a pretty pupil of his brought him presents, bottles of perfume, cravats and handkerchiefs. That was in 1904 and I was a country boy who, after school in the South and a year of Columbia studies, plus the theatre and music of the New York season, had got to London. The first of these ladies gave me a copy of "Man and Superman," the second praised it to the skies.

Since that time I have seen several and read all of Shaw's plays and read most of his other books. My sense of his plays has been that of most people, I suppose: of their immense talent at their best — "Candida," for example, "Heartbreak House," some of "Caesar and Cleopatra"—of a feeling that I could never endure going through it all again, as in "Major Barbara"; of tumescence and repetition of himself in "The Apple Cart." I have, like many others, seen such aspects of him as his courage, his trick of coming out all right himself as history goes forward and other champions to their ruin or martyrdom, his facility along with a conscious and subconscious slipperiness in argument, his goodness, brilliance, tact, bad taste and overwhelming exhibitionism. I have seen him getting older and more garrulous. I have been sad and embarrassed over his growing publicity bee, the senility of a phonograph record that a young German-Italian musician played for me last year in Florence, mimicking the affair exactly as soon as the needle stopped; and I have watched in shame the cheapness and bad taste in a talkie of him, where a large Broadway audience saw this old man turning his head and chirping about his profile and getting off jibes ancient to his readers but confusing to many of them who had never heard of him before, though the whole whimsy of the exhibition rested on an assumption of universal fame. I have observed that he is England's hero now, without being convinced at all, because I know what white hairs can do to British sentiment; they refused to take his ideas once when he was rampant with texts and causes; but yield all now to an old darling. I have heard from many sources what a discourser he has become; have seen distressing [illegible] he is unanswerable, unerringly persuasive, or is at [illegible] you let him rush you along and never suits and scenery, and standing with celebrities of every sort; and have never ceased to hear also of his great goodness, high spirits and charm. I have never met Mr. Shaw, though we have numerous friends in common, and I have twice been within two feet of him, and last year for three blocks walked in the street behind another gentleman and him to see if he would stop talking for a second, which he did not. Nevertheless, when all is said and done, I can believe I have a better admiration and knowledge of him than many who would inject more glamor into their comments. The fact remains, however, that he has too often won the argument and has busily created the portrait of himself that he would like to see accepted.

Frank Harris, around whose "Bernard Shaw" this brief note turns, I saw once, a long visit from which I carry a recollection of a strong and rich nature, great cordiality and entertaining talk in a beautiful, persuasive voice. Everyone knows something of his books, his impetuosities, the scandals, difficulties, unreliabilities, disciples, and powers of mind and body that go with his reputation. One transcription of these, written by Mr. Shaw, is to be found in this book, whose proofs were sent by the publishers after Harris' death to Shaw for correction and approval. The postscript in the volume explains why Mr. Shaw must set down some comment on his friend in order to make clear his own position as regards this history of himself, lest, as he says, it be thought that in passing the proofs for press as corrected by him he should seem to be endorsing everything said of him by Harris. There are many things he could not say without doing his friend harm. Frank Harris' virtues, we learn, were strong and clear enough, his powers great, and so on, despite the cloud under which Harris during those last years of his life had managed to get himself. He was a man of splendid visions, unreasoning expectations; his life was on two planes, one imaginative, with the invariable generosity of his transports of indignation, pity, scorn, etc., the other a prose plane where he won maledictions and got into difficulties in which it was not always possible to defend him. The real difficulty was that he did not understand himself. Shaw cannot endorse, naturally, all the judgments in a book where his sociological work appears in the biographer's eyes as so insignificant and "the most negligible sex episodes—or lack of episodes—appear of supreme importance." Harris also, for all the reputation and fame and brilliance of his "Contemporary Portraits," was not a biographer at all—a portrait painter if you like. Et cetera. In this little defense Mr. Shaw as usual comes off nicely. As Frank Harris says of him, he is wonderfully cool in the face of criticism and calm in tone. As a matter of fact what happens is that he contrives to dispose, it would seem, of the whole book, and pretty much of its author. In his customary way

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stop to see what premises you let him smother you with. I will not say that he is deceptive in all this, but only that he is habitual and highly persuasive.

I have read none of the reviews of this book on Shaw by Frank Harris, but I have been told that for the most part Harris gets little credit at best, and that frequently the cudgels are for him and for Shaw the plums. The book has its obvious faults. Many times Harris is headlong with regard to outer facts. Sometimes, by a curious lack of taste, he seems to lose the argument where Shaw, with an equal lack of taste, could have won it. He has a trick, too, that does him no ultimate advantage of making a whole case out of a single situation or incident, as Shaw makes a whole case out of an opinion or half-truth. This note is only to point out that Harris is very likely much oftener right on Shaw than you might conclude off the bat. By a certain intuition, by his long observation of Shaw and by the force of his own powers, he hits the nail on the head, I believe, more often than we might be led to think, certainly than Mr. Shaw himself in this smooth-sailing postscript portrait would lead us to think. A few quotations and afterward a few of Harris' points of criticism must suffice here; it is better to go through the book.

> At that last meeting Emma Goldman was present. Shaw and I talk a lot, but she has lived her convictions more than most of us and has been punished for them.

> He was excessively sensitive [as a child] and found his eyes filling with tears at the slightest rebuff. The struggle with this humiliating weakness was the beginning of the exasperating self-control he achieved as an adult.

On page 113 the account of Shaw's review, when he was a music critic, of Beethoven's "Eroica"—he had been fed on music at home throughout his early years. The symphony was compared to a funeral in the Shaw family back in Dublin, the sadness of mien as they left the house, the rising spirits during the ride, the solemn gloom as they arrived at the cemetery; very funny, very good to sell the paper to cheap people; very confusing to readers like Huneker and Godowsky and their estimate of the critic.

> Wherever Shaw has succeeded you will find that he has attached himself to some more enterprising spirit who has taken all the money risks.

> The critics said of such early work as the "Widowers' Houses," "there is unpleasantness enough in life without looking in a playhouse for it." They say this when a play is neither amusing nor tragic, but halfway between, and that's where Shaw's plays invariably landed.

> Shaw's relations with women have always been gallant, coy even . . . the first man to cut a path through the theatre and leave it strewn with virgins. If the virgins were like most of the women Shaw has portrayed in his plays I can well understand why they remained so . . . vital defects in Shaw's women, their lack of mystery, grace, divinity, allure and charm. All he can fill them with is a preoccupation with the Life-Force—like a laboratory experiment at the Rockefeller Institute.

> He claims that modern drama with its eternal triangle proves that love can be the dullest of subjects, though he calls love "adultery" so as to have the support of the puritans.

In a letter to Harris, Shaw said "I liked sexual intercourse because of its amazing power of producing a celestial flood of emotion and exaltation of existence which, however momentary, gave me a sample of what may one day be the normal state of being for mankind in intellectual ecstasy. I always gave the wildest expression to this in a torrent of words, partly because I felt it due to the woman to know what I felt in her arms and partly because I wanted her to share it." The idea of this intellectual passion is familiar to us all in Plato, Spenser and elsewhere, the rest of the picture is irresistibly funny, and Harris read into it all Shaw's limitations in the love element of his plays.

(After discussing Shaw's fluctuations and limitations during the World War): "But Shaw remains true to himself in a certain sense. I mean true to the psychical Babel that *is* Shaw."

That quotation leads to one of the questions raised in the book: Shaw's violent preachments, bold actions and prosperous outcomes as they strike a nature like Harris'. Mr. Shaw, as we have already seen, takes care of that by letting us understand Harris' visionary and impulsive unreasonableness, but he knows very well what Harris really meant: he meant the difference between great men who have gone straight through with their beliefs even into death, and other men who, however brave and sincere in spots and intervals, do not. He meant that you may have a certain lively common sense by the year—prudence, too, perhaps—or you may have, like Socrates and others, a wise greatness belonging to time.

And when Harris speaks of will, love, envy, "passions that are as primitive as they are enduring" and so on, he cannot be relegated to doing a mere injustice to himself and implying a direction of mere savagery. It might spell well for Shavian drama if this were so. Harris may state his case rather hastily, but what he means, and what he knows out of his own self and his championships of great men, are those elements in us which are parallel with forces in nature and are the very scope and soil of human life, and within which and through which that social regulation, improvement and so on that Mr. Shaw paints must work. First we have the sun's energy, then we study how to use it, if you like; and the same thing parallels itself in art, which first of all involves the creation of a great matrix of human elements. But I will not be put in the childish attitude of arguing about

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in whose plays the lack of creation when it occurs is often so well hidden by a glitter or dysentery, as the case may be, of words.

With the Shaw and Shakespeare claims Harris may waver now and again in his dialectic, but his analysis is sound enough and Shaw looks very small; though it is as true that Shakespeare has no lines on slum buildings as that Homer, writing on flying gods, had never smelled gasoline.

As to Mr. Shaw's great kindness and his stiff objection to having it known, only the most unimaginative puritanism does not see that in every good action the essence and flower of the act is in itself what is most seminative and that the very news of it is a form of life.

This is only a meager note, as I said, to point again to a book that, when the smooth and kindly skids that Shaw has put under it and also some of its own details are forgotten, may remain in the memory as well grounded and, under some elusive eternal species, often sound criticism.

STARK YOUNG.

What Do the Liberals Hope For?

IT IS CURIOUS to read today the writings of the American liberals in the days just before the depression. No matter how realistic they seemed to be, they all had a way of ending in bursts of language that left you blank.

Consider, for example, the conclusion of Stuart Chase's pamphlet on "Waste and the Machine Age." Stuart Chase is perhaps the vividest writer of the liberal camp; he has an unusual knack of making statistics take shape as things and people. And in "The Tragedy of Waste" and his other books he worked stubbornly to disillusion us with the blessings of the American "prosperity" era. But here is his final message:

> I see before us three alternatives. We can drift with the tide as at present. We can adopt some simple formula like "government by business" or "state socialism" and thus attempt to run a dreadnaught with a donkey engine. Or we can face the full implications of the machine, relying on no formulas, with nothing to guide us but our naked intelligence and a will to conquer.
>
> The stars, alas, predict the first; Russia proved the futility of the second when the Marxian formula gave way to the New Economic Policy; the last is the great adventure—the boldest, most exhilarating, most dangerous adventure that ever challenged the intelligence and spirit of mankind. From our brains have sprung a billion horses, now running wild and almost certain sooner or later to run amuck. Where are the rulers with their whirling ropes; where the light-hearted youths to mount, be thrown and rise to mount again?

But what did all this mean? Evidently, what was lacking was not light-hearted youths—the colleges and schools were full of them—but any explicit directions to them on the part of Stuart Chase.

And here is the conclusion of Walter Lippmann's chapter on "The Business of the Great Society" in "A Preface to Morals"—a book which gives an excellent account of the situation of the intelligent modern man who finds that all the moral motives have evaporated:

> The more perfectly we understand the implications of the machine technology upon which our civilization is based, the easier it will be for us to live with it. We shall discern the ideals of our industry in the necessities of industry itself. They are the direction in which it must evolve if it is to fulfil itself. That is what ideals are. They are not hallucinations. They are not a collection of pretty and casual preferences. Ideals are an imaginative understanding of that which is desirable in that which is possible. As we discern the ideals of the machine technology we can consciously pursue them, knowing that we are not vainly trying to impose our casual prejudices, but that we are in harmony with the age we live in.

But what did this really mean? What is this Machine Technology which is apotheosized as a transcendent being with ideals to which it is necessary for human beings to adapt themselves? One had supposed that man, the tool-making animal, had himself created technique and that it existed only in so far as he practised it. "In harmony with the age we live in"—but are not we—the Lippmanns and the people who read him—the age we live in as much as anybody? Mr. Lippmann, having shown out the old-time God, ushers in a new and much less plausible one called "Machine Technology" in whose awful sight even he, the professional political philosopher, cannot presume to play an authoritative part in the age in which he lives!

Finally, here is the conclusion of the Beards' "Rise of American Civilization." Mr. Charles A. Beard is one of the best American writers of his generation and "The Rise of American Civilization" is a masterpiece of economy and organization. Never perhaps has an immense historical subject been more beautifully and completely articulated in so small a compass. And never have the proportions of popular legend been altered with a bolder and firmer hand. With the Beards, every sentence, every clause, carries its cool facts as the sentences in other books carry nouns and verbs—and the fighting of the Civil War shrinks to three pages while the origins of the forces that produced it take up a couple of hundred. When the Beards got to the end of their story, however, they could only write a brilliant essay on the present—no doubt the best of all the essays because it was the work of wider-ranging as well as more concrete minds than the woolly generalizations that used to come out in the magazines in such quantities; but—what was disappointing—they could only end this essay as follows:

> If the generality of opinion, as distinguished from that of poignant specialists, was taken into account, there was no doubt about the nature of the future in America. [They still talk like historians writing about

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the past, but evidently they are giving their own opinion about the present.] The most common note of assurance was belief in unlimited progress—the continuous fulfilment of the historic idea which had slowly risen through the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries to a position of commanding authority. Concretely it meant an invulnerable faith in democracy, in the ability of the undistinguished masses, as contrasted with heroes and classes, to meet by reasonably competent methods the issues raised in the flow of time—a faith in the efficacy of that new and mysterious instrument of the modern mind, "the invention of invention," moving from one technological triumph to another, overcoming the exhaustion of crude natural resources and energies, effecting an ever wider distribution of the blessings of civilization—health, security, material goods, knowledge, leisure and esthetic appreciation, and through the cumulative forces of intellectual and artistic reactions, conjuring from the vasty deeps of the nameless and unknown creative imagination of the noblest order, subduing physical things to the empire of the spirit—doubting not the capacity of the Power that had summoned into being all patterns of the past and present, living and dead, to fulfill its endless destiny.

If so, it is the dawn, not the dusk, of the gods.

Again, what did this mean? Mr. Beard may not have wanted to run the danger of being mistaken for a "poignant specialist," but one had expected something more definite from him than this. The "invulnerable faith in democracy" of his peroration seems a little out of place at the end of a history which has been so largely preoccupied with extremely undemocratic situations of group-conflict and group-exploitation; and the "faith in the efficacy of that new and mysterious instrument of the human mind, 'the invention of invention,' moving from one technological triumph to another," etc., seems more incongruous still. "That new and mysterious instrument"—"the more perfectly we understand the implications of the machine technology." Mr. Beard, who has just been pointing out to us with such acumen how every political movement, every artistic tendency, every migration, every war, has depended on somebody's interest, finally makes everybody's interest depend on an apotheosized abstraction—that "new and mysterious instrument" that moves "from one technological triumph to another" and conjures "from the vasty deeps of the nameless and unknown creative imagination of the noblest order."

"If so"—but if what?—"it is the dawn, not the dusk, of the gods." What gods? and why this talk of dusk?

II

One accepted this sort of thing before the depression even though one could never see quite what it meant nor how it followed from what went before. And one has no right to complain about it now: it is too easy to be wise after the event.

But it is rather disquieting today to find Mr. Lippmann, Mr. Beard and Mr. Chase still continuing in the same vein. Mr. Chase's "Declaration of Independence" in Harper's is a meditation which, though full of all kinds of admirable sentiments expressed with considerable eloquence, seems to take place a long way off from the scene of action: "America is too fine a land to be longer drugged by the infantile slogans and dazzled by the glittering gadgets of shoddy speculators. It deserves a civilization as great as its majestic distances, its rolling prairies, its mighty rivers and massed sierras," etc. He appeals to the "intelligent minority" to act their age and escape from the standards of golf-playing country-club-joining suburban society. But what to do? In the name of what?

Mr. Beard in an article in the same number of Harper's in which he recommends as "much planning" as "is necessary," winds up with a vision of the future even giddier than that at the end of his history: "And, to paraphrase Milton, methinks puissant America, mewing her mighty youth, will yet kindle her undazzled eyes at the full midday beam, purge and unscale her long abused sight, while timorous and flocking birds, with those that love the twilight, flutter about amazed at what she means, and in their envious gabble would prognosticate a year of sects and schisms." But what does Mr. Beard think she means? Unless she receives a sudden revelation, I don't see how she is to avoid a year or many years as the battleground of sects and schisms who want her to mean different things. And in two articles in Scribner's, "Rushlights in Our Darkness" and "A Search for a Center," he does little to supply this revelation. He tells us that about all we can do is fall back on a "philosophy of ethical reconciliation"—which the old master of social actualities then proceeds to adumbrate in a void from which the social actualities of the present have been completely swept away.

And Mr. Lippmann, trusting nowadays in the bankers and attempting tactfully to slip a few liberal notions into the minds of Herald Tribune readers, is coming to chill us more and more with the suspicion that all his beautiful diplomacy has ended in his coming back from the ride with the liberal inside and the smile on the face of the banker.

One of the most striking things about all these writers is their avoidance of the subject of socialism and communism, or their misrepresentation, when they do touch on it, of what is going on in Russia. According to Chase in the passage quoted above, the Russians "proved the futility" of socialism "when the Marxian formula gave way to the New Economic Policy." But the N.E.P. period has passed and the Five Year Plan is in its fourth year. Mr. Chase changes the subject to Mexico and seems to imply that we should all be much better off if we were able to live as if modern industry didn't exist. More recently, however, he has gone so far as to contrast the balance-sheet of the Soviets with that of the United States.

Mr. Beard, whose American history up to the very last pages might almost be an elaboration of certain passages on capitalist expansion in "Das Kapital," is evidently so anxious to fight shy of communism that in his article reviewing proposed policies of social salvation he barely mentions the philosophy of the Soviets, though he discusses Mussolini at length.

In an earlier article in The Forum—"A 'Five Year Plan' for America"—he makes the following points against Russian Communism: that its policy of planning was "an afterthought and never would have been even partially realized had it not been for the technological assistance of Western capitalism"; that "the Russian plan" is not a real plan anyway, because "for more than ten years the Russian government has pursued a zigzag course, trying one

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expedient after another"; and that "it rules by tyranny and terror, with secret police, espionage and arbitrary executions." Well, why on earth should the first two of these facts be put forward, as Beard does specifically put them forward, as objections to "a dictatorship in the name of the proletariat"? As a matter of fact, Marx had said that communism would have to make use of the technological developments of capitalism. That, in fact, is one of his principal points; so that there is little sense in Beard's statement that the Bolsheviks "laid aside Marx" and "took up Frederick Winslow Taylor": industrial efficiency as it existed before Taylor appeared to give his name to it is what "Das Kapital" is mostly about. In any case, what difference does it make whether the Bolsheviks' idea of planning was an afterthought or not?—and what is there damaging about their having been obliged to follow a zigzag course? Why should it be a matter for surprise or reproach that they could not establish communism overnight? And as for the third item of his indictment, what on earth makes Mr. Beard talk as if the capitalist government of the United States did not rule "by tyranny and terror, with secret police, espionage and arbitrary executions?" Mr. Beard must know that the "personal liberty" which he asserts that the American tradition safeguards but thinks that the Soviets suppress, is not today worth a cent as soon as you step out of your owning-class orbit, and that you are lucky if you do not land in jail or get run out of town or shot, like the reporters, Brookwood organizers and American Civil Liberties representatives who tried to lend a hand at Harlan or Lawrence. In his later article, he gets around communism by treating it as if it were merely a form like another of the belief in pure economics: "Economics in Russia," he says, "did not automatically supply the great illumination." But it is not economics as a pure science which is the issue: it is economics in the sense of the difference in standards of living between an exploiting and an exploited class; it is economics in the sense of the attempt to abolish such social classes. It seems absurd to say it of a man of Mr. Beard's record and attainments, but it looks as if Marx and Lenin were playing the part of bogies upon which all these writers were having a hard time to shut their doors. In a recent article in The New Republic on the promotion of the German navy under the Empire, Mr. Beard made a point at the beginning of reassuring his readers that the facts he was about to reveal would not give any comfort to the Marxists, and then went on to describe a case of the exploitation of patriotism by capital which illustrated Marx's theory superbly.

And Mr. Lippmann has shown himself the master of them all by exalting himself to a plane where he is able to tell the readers of The Herald Tribune that Russian society is the same thing as American, but only as yet in a lower stage of development.

III

Not that these writers do not, so far as one can tell, contemplate that American society shall ultimately adopt some form of socialism. Mr. Lippmann, in "A Preface to Morals," expressed the belief that American business was on its way to socializing itself. And there was a common assumption among liberals before the slump that an inverse capitalistic process. That was, in fact, the liberal's only excuse for being.

The attitude is very clearly seen in "The Autobiography of Lincoln Steffens," published only last year. In this extraordinarily interesting book, we have the story of an American born in the sixties who acutely studies at first hand and in all its ramifications the corruption of the American social structure, who watches the political reform movements from the inside and who finally comes to the conclusion, as the result of contact with Socialists and Single-Taxers, that it is the economic system and not merely the crimes of bad men in office which is responsible for the social diseases of the time; who consorts with the American radicals of the early years of the century; beholds the Mexican revolution, for lack of fundamental socialist principles, lapse back into the hands of the privileged classes; sees the Kerensky revolution in Russia superseded by the Bolsheviks, who base their policy upon Marxist principles—greatly to the dismay of many American socialists, who are horrified by the actual spectacle of the realization of their aims; but finally returns to the United States to find his boyhood home in California inhabited by a liberal Governor who refuses to pardon Mooney and Billings, only to base his hopes of American salvation on Henry Ford's high wages and the calling by Hoover after the first stock-market crash of a conference of leading business men, and even to look comfortably forward to a time when the bootleggers shall have grown out of their "criminal stage" and "having bought their way all through politics to a place beside the power trust and the railroads," established themselves as a respectable trust. He even reaches a point of enthusiasm where he is able to say of the autobiographical boloney ghost-written by Samuel Crowther for Ford that "it might well be the Bible, as Ford is the prophet, of business."

I do not know whether Mr. Steffens still so confidently swears by this Bible. I have heard intimations that he does not. But these opinions, even after the depression had commenced, on the part of a man of Mr. Steffens' unusual intelligence and remarkably wide social and political experience, are significant of the effects of American "prosperity" psychology on the minds of our political critics.

Ford the prophet had become our favorite myth—conjured up by the acuteness of our need to get some kind of democratic hero out of our advanced and inflated stage of capitalism. George Soule, in an article in The Virginia Quarterly, has shown how, though the Ford of legend never really existed, it was found necessary to invent him. It had been the custom of capitalism in the past to save money in manufacturing as far as the unions would let it by paying labor as little as possible: it did not have the imagination to foresee that, with so many people thus impoverished, few would be able to buy its products. Ford, for reasons which from the best accounts were by no means primarily dictated by overflowing benevolence toward labor—the opportunity for big publicity and for holding out a bait to strong and rapid workers—undertook without union pressure—he had forbidden organization in his factories—to raise the worker's pay. He also undertook to bring a luxury within the reach of the masses. At the time of the voyage of the Peace Ship, moreover, he had

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lent himself in what seems to have been a real burst of magnanimity to the projects of certain internationalists. But how could we have hoped that Ford's few eccentric gleams of idealism and democratic feeling would transform or meant the beginning of a transformation of the vast greedy system which he understood so little? Under pressure from his business back home, he got cold feet on the Peace Ship before it landed; and since then the system has been steadily transforming him into its own harsh and narrow likeness. Today he is as badly off as anyone and his workers have had to pay for his losses like the workers in any other plant.

Who today in any camp on the left can have the optimism to believe that capitalism is capable of reforming itself? And who today can look forward with confidence to any outcome from the present chaos short of the establishment of a socialistic society—not like the Russian: how could it be? America is not Russia—but with this in common with Russia: that it shall aim to abolish social classes and private enterprise for private profit?

IV

Yet these liberals, who presumably aim at socialism, still apparently pin great hopes on the capitalists.

They draw up schemes for "planned economies" which are designed to preserve the capitalist system while eliminating some of its worst features—though so far as one can tell from what they write, they haven't the ghost of an idea of an agency to put even these into effect. The liberals of today are not a part of a progressive movement like the liberals of the Wilson-Roosevelt era. One can only suppose that they are hoping for some such movement, though it is not clear where it is coming from nor why, after Roosevelt and Wilson, they should expect it to accomplish what they want. Assume even that Franklin Roosevelt is made President at the next election—assume even that he is induced to pay attention to the proposals of one of the liberal "plans." Isn't it evident that these proposals would ultimately be reduced to the same status as Herbert Croly's "Promise of American Life" by the time it had been brayed in the mortar of Roosevelt's campaign speeches or as George Record's socialism by the time it had been filtered through Wilson? Since there is no Wilson or T. R. in sight, would they even fare so well? It would be the capitalists, not the liberals, who would do the planning; and they would plan to save their own skins at the expense of whoever had to bleed.

Roosevelt and Wilson were both owning-class men who, though their imaginations went somewhat beyond their class, never did anything seriously to injure its interests. They tried to save the system they were on top of by a few reforms and a great deal of sheer hot air. Now what one wants to ask the liberals of today is how they can hope to get a new creative statesmanship out of the psychology of that owning-class. One wonders to how great an extent they may have come to share that psychology themselves.

For one feels, as one reads them today, that, in spite of their expressions of moral and esthetic dissatisfaction, they are still sold like other middle-class Americans on the values of the middle-class world which they criticize. You will look in vain in any of their recent utterances for any really damaging attack on these values. Stuart Chase has come out strongly in favor of the Americans' playing less golf; but he manages to sound as smug as if he were playing golf every day. Desperate capitalists who, finding their system breaking up in their hands and searching their hearts as to how they ought to act, should consult Mr. Chase in Harper's, would be likely to conclude that American life was sounder and more placid than they had supposed. And when Walter Lippmann tells people over the radio that "we must face some more reduction in the costs of retail goods, of rents and of labor," there is no question whom he means by "we." Mr. Lippmann's "we" are not the workers who have to face having their wages reduced, but the employers who have to face reducing them. And Mr. Lippmann is ready to do anything in his power to help them muster the morale to face it.

Without, no doubt, being conscious of it, these writers seem unwilling to face the implications of the middle-class acceptance of the status quo—which involves at the present time the forcing-down of the working-class below the bare subsistence level in order that the owning-class may not be obliged to sacrifice comforts and luxuries—a state of things always easy to ignore for the reason noted by Henry George after the depression of the seventies: that to force people down below a certain level is to force them out of existence altogether. In any case, you hear very little about it in what these students of society have been writing.

In fact, though they are better informed and more enlightened than the average American business man, their imagination does not extend much further nor their logic cut much deeper. Their political thinking is mediocre because their solidarity is middle-class. And this is a disappointment to one who has read them in the past with profit. Writers of their intellectual eminence have no business to succumb to the influence of standards of living. What is at the bottom of the capitalist crisis is class-differences in standards of living with the special habits and ideas they involve and of which it is as hard for the ordinary person to divest himself as for the leopard to change his spots. It is hard for anybody; but if our professional illuminati can't break through them to some larger grasp of the world which is cracking up around us, we deserve all to be cooked together. EDMUND WILSON.

The editors of The New Republic sent advance proofs of Mr. Wilson's article to the men who are discussed in it, inviting them to comment on his article if they cared to do so. One such comment, by Stuart Chase, appears below. If others are received, they will be published promptly.

A discussion by The New Republic of some of the points raised by Mr. Wilson will be found on page 336 of this issue.—THE EDITORS.

Mr. Chase Replies

THIS IS a free country—more or less—and Mr. Wilson has as good a right to attack me for my economic views as a Presbyterian has to attack an agnostic. He has recently been converted to one of the forms of communism, and safe in the arms of Marx can take pot shots at those outside the compound. I do not feel, how-

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ever, that his shots are very well aimed. Overcome with zeal, he has fired his clods too fast.

He implies that I am, first, a hopeless, middle-class liberal, second, a defamer of Soviet Russia; he implies, third, that I have nothing to offer in the current depression. He cites one essay from Harper's Magazine, and part of a sentence from a pamphlet, as the twin pillars upon which his indictment rests. The essay was a highly personal reaction to a number of American living conditions which I do not happen to like. It was sincere but hardly profound. To take it as an expression of a final economic philosophy is grossly unfair. In reading the sentence which had to do with Russia, Mr. Wilson completely misinterpreted my meaning, though I do not think he intended it deliberately. I cited Russia as an example of the futility of slogans. In 1921 Lenin found that pure socialism would not work, and introduced an area of private trading, much of which remains. Whether it will work ultimately remains to be seen. One would not be surprised if it did. My point was to show that dogma seldom survives the pragmatic test at any given testing period.

If Mr. Wilson had taken time to read carefully only a small part of what I have written in the last few years, his indictment would perforce be cast in other and more intellectually competent terms. I do not care to waste anybody's time arguing about a private declaration of independence or half a sentence. But to a true bill I will argue indefinitely. I propose to recast the indictment, with or without Mr. Wilson's permission:

> Chase is a man difficult to place. He is obviously not an orthodox liberal, for he supports the Russian dictatorship, and repeatedly hints at the benefits of an economic dictatorship in this country. The hints include a recent article in The Nation entitled "If I Were Dictator." He seldom mentions free speech, free press or political reform, while the majesties of political democracy and the ballot leave him cold. His criticism of the going economic system has been unremitting and severe. He has catalogued its appalling wastes with considerable industry; he has done his best to undermine the theory and the practice of commercial salesmanship; he has presented item by item the mismanagement of machine technology in the modern world; he has analyzed Coolidge prosperity quantitatively and found it largely myth; he has documented unemployment, overproduction, the lack of integrity in a pecuniary civilization; he has flashed a sidelight from the handicraft economy of Mexico as a count in the bill of technological abuses—while recognizing the offsetting evils of a handicraft regime, and the utter impossibility of retreat to that regime. He has visited Russia, and returned enormously excited by the Gosplan, and not at all perturbed, like his friend Roger Baldwin, by the G.P.U. He has defended the Russian economic experiment consistently and on occasion belligerently.
>
> Since the market crash of 1929, he has made a number of reasonably drastic proposals for revamping the industrial structure, including mandatory national and regional planning, the social control of new investment, the breaking up of large incomes and large inheritances, regulation and profit limitation of all corporations affected with a public interest, compulsory unemployment [illegible] national income to the end that workers receive far more, absentee owners far less. He obviously has no faith whatever in the profit motive as an automatic guide to economic well being.
>
> Such, briefly, is Chase's official record. He has been attacking the whole American economic structure, until many are sick and tired of listening to him. Now why in the name of all the gods does he not announce himself, call that structure capitalism, identify his remedies as planks in the platform of socialism? Or better, why, in view of his analysis, does he not refuse to waste his time with palliatives and planks, but come out for communism and a clean sweep? Why all the hedging and crawling; the refusal to call a spade a spade?

Well, I'll tell you, Mr. Edmund Wilson. While you were dissecting Proust and other literary gentlemen—and a very pretty job you did—I was dissecting the industrial structure. For almost twenty years I've been at that job. I have been off and on a devout single-taxer, a member of the pre-war Socialist party, a devotee of Consumers' Cooperation, a convert to Guild Socialism, a near communist. I found good in all these theories, but none could I accept as an act of faith, or as a sovereign remedy. Their tidy syllogisms, framed so long ago, were forever being punctured before my eyes by a new invention, a new financial move, a new industrial method, new findings by the anthropologists and the psychologists, a new hundred million horse power. I tried hard to make the facts fit the syllogisms and they would not fit. Ah, what I should have been saved in peace of mind if they only had.

They would not fit, Mr. Edmund Wilson—neither the standard definitions of capitalism, socialism, communism, nor the standard analyses, nor the classical remedies. It is probable at the present time, for instance, that more than half the economic activity of this country is in the zone of collectivism, broadly interpreted, rather than in the zone of free competition and traditional capitalism. I do not use these words, because I do not know what they mean, save in the muzziest way. If I appeal now to the middle class, particularly the technician, it is because a decade of working with the labor movement has taught me that for the moment most of American labor is spiritually bankrupt. If I often disregard the severe canons of the Marxian class struggle, it is because those lines, to date, are blurred and unrecognizable over great portions of the American industrial front, sharp as they may be in Europe, and because a more dynamic conception is mandatory here.

Some years ago I came to the conclusion that we were not going to resolve the problems of poverty, waste and human degradation in America by employing these standard dogmas. Somebody had to find out what was really going on, not what Karl Marx, seventy years ago, said might go on. He was a good guesser, but seventy years is a long time. Somebody had to find a new analysis to fit the American scene, the American temperament, molded by the frontier and a world of a billion horse power. I am looking for a synthesis a good way ahead of your orthodox communism, Mr. Wilson, and yet one which can begin to work. Now; here. I may not find it, but I shall keep on looking until I die. It does not matter. Others are looking too. Some day it will be found.

STUART CHASE.

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Washington Notes

The Democratic Race to the Swift—Roosevelt's Nomination—Al in Travail—Baker and the League—A Plan up the Sleeve

CONCEDING that this is a poor post from which to survey the national situation, and that correspondents who base their judgment on what they gather here very often go wrong, Washington remains the one place in which politicians from all sections and all parties concentrate and fulminate. Inasmuch as the Democratic race for the presidential nomination—if it can still be called a race—is the most interesting political matter of the moment, it may be worth while to state the attitude of the Democratic leaders who are here or come here. I think it fair to say that the overwhelming opinion is that Roosevelt will be nominated. I think it also fair to say that the bulk of the more important Democrats are not at all pleased with the prospect. In addition, I think it fair to state that among those who would prefer to see some other than the present Governor of New York named, there is a distinct resentment against the former Governor of New York—to wit, Alfred Emanuel Smith. I am again reflecting the sentiment and talk of the Democrats here who are not committed to Roosevelt—and these include the more influential among them—when I give the reasons back of these statements.

First, there is the general belief that Roosevelt will be nominated. This is founded on the fact that the skillful campaign made for him, plus the political asset of the Raskob-Smith hostility, plus his progressive appeal, plus his willingness to subordinate prohibition as an issue, have thrown the West, the Northwest and most of the South into his lap. Tammany support, which it seems clear he will have, gives him New York. Add this all up in terms of convention votes and Roosevelt's great advantage can be grasped. It will take determined and well led opposition to block him. There is opposition, but not that kind.

When I describe the bulk of the Democratic leadership as being displeased with the prospects, I should perhaps add that this statement does not apply to the best of the leaders, but rather to the leaders in the larger industrial states of the East, where the bulk of the private electoral votes are lodged. In these one finds a distrust of Mr. Roosevelt's ability and a distaste for him as a candidate. The leaders in these states reflect two elements—one the business interests, which consider Mr. Roosevelt unsound on economic matters and too close to the Western progressives like Wheeler and Norris and La Follette; the other the Wet element, which is displeased because of what they term his alliance with and support by the Dry politicians in the South. There is also the hostility of those inclined to follow Smith's lead.

As for the third statement, about the resentment among Smith's friends toward Smith, this seems to be due to his failure to supply leadership or action. An early knowledge of his coldness to Roosevelt's candidacy and faith in his political wisdom and skill caused them to believe that Roosevelt would not be allowed to "make the grade," and favors. Then they could all swing in, block Roosevelt and put over Young, Baker or Ritchie, all of whom are preferred in the East. But here it is February, with the primaries in a number of states only a month off, and Smith's inaction is complete. He preserves a somewhat sullen silence, is even more unfriendly to the Governor than before, but does nothing. He will not enter the primaries himself, and he has no candidate to give his friends in the so-called Smith states. Not even Mr. Raskob knows what he is going to do, or when. It is, therefore, easy to sympathize with the attitude of these Smith politicians, whose hero won't lead but just growls.

Massachusetts is the state, I think, which best illustrates the situation. This is decidedly a state where there is more sentiment for Smith than for anyone else. Governor Ely and the two Democratic Senators—Walsh and Coolidge—are regarded as pro-Smith, ready to follow his advice as to candidates. They are not pro-Roosevelt in the least. The pro-Roosevelt fellow is Mayor Jim Curley of Boston, between whom and the Governor there is no political accord or friendship whatever. With Smith as a candidate, or with a candidate actively supported by Smith, the Ely-Walsh crowd could swing the state away from Roosevelt without much trouble. At least they are convinced of their ability to do this. But if Smith does not run himself and does not endorse someone who will run, Mr. Curley is going to capture the Massachusetts delegates and the Messrs. Ely and Walsh — Senator Coolidge does not count very much—will not figure importantly in the Democratic convention. Worse—much worse—if Governor Roosevelt is nominated and elected, it will be Curley who will have his ear in the matter of federal patronage for Massachusetts. In effect, Curley will be the boss.

A somewhat similar condition exists in Pennsylvania. There too, Smith as the strongest man might easily beat Roosevelt in the primaries. But unless there is a great change in his present attitude, Roosevelt will have no opposition in Pennsylvania, will get the seventy-six delegates from that state by default, and Mr. Guffey will again be sitting on top of the Democratic heap in that state. Moreover, if Roosevelt should carry the Pennsylvania primaries, all doubt about his nomination will disappear. The fight will be over, and the only jobs of the convention will be to select a candidate for Vice President and adopt a platform.

This is the way Democrats with whom I talk see the situation. It can be summed up in this way—Roosevelt will be nominated unless Smith stops him and Smith has so far done nothing to stop him, except to permit a general understanding of his dislike for the man and disapproval of his candidacy. A candidate with a lead such as Roosevelt's cannot be stopped in any such childish way and everybody with the slightest political gumption knows it. One disgruntled friend of Smith said the other day, in talking of Smith's attitude, "Al is in travail." It about expresses it, but if Al does not come out of "travail" pretty speedily, he might just as well not come out at all.

In the meantime, the Favorite Son candidates are mark- [illegible]

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to have eliminated him from consideration, put himself "back in the picture," as the Washington correspondents love to phrase it, by a declaration just before sailing for a holiday, that he does not want a League plank in the platform, does not believe the League should be made an issue and does not think the country should enter the League until the sentiment of the people is overwhelmingly for doing so. This, I may say, puts it off for quite some time. None the less, in Baker's statement there was nothing inconsistent with his record on the subject. Its effect was to revive talk of him as a candidate—but what's the use if no one is going to enter the primaries against Roosevelt in Pennsylvania and Massachusetts? Baker will not, Smith will not, Ritchie will not, Garner will not. Who then? The answer, apparently, is nobody. And what does that mean? Every one of the anti-Roosevelt leaders knows what it means and that is what makes them sick and sore. They know that if they had had leadership and direction they could have stopped Mr. Roosevelt. But the man they thought would lead has confined himself to sulking.

It may be that all this does Mr. Smith an injustice and that he has some deep scheme in his mind by which Roosevelt's candidacy will be ditched and someone more to the taste of his followers and friends be selected by the convention. He has on various occasions since his 1928 defeat referred to himself as the "titular leader of my party" and it is reasonable to suppose he would like to justify this titular leadership in the present situation. He may have a plan, but if so, there has been no evidence of it up to date, and not one of his closest friends and companions seems to have an inkling of it. If he is going to wait much longer to divulge his plan, he might just as well not have any.

Washington. T. R. B.

"Let's Build A Railroad"

THE FIRST Russian talkie to be shown publicly in this country has none of the technical skill and finish that characterized the silent films of Eisenstein and his associates. "Road to Life" gives the impression of being produced by amateurs, some with a natural gift for acting, others with a mania for preaching, all with a simple and admirable faith in the virtues of the system under which they live. It isn't at all difficult to list the faults of the picture. The story is a mixture of moralizing and melodrama, sweetened with two parts of sentiment. The photography is generally conventional. The titles, which Michael Gold seems to have translated pretty literally from the Russian, are more reminiscent of "Ten Nights in a Barroom" than of "Ten Days That Shook the World." But in spite of these faults, and half a dozen others, I would rather see this picture than the slickest society drama that ever came out of Hollywood. The Russian films take you somewhere; they rouse your anger or enthusiasm; they get something done.

"Road to Life" is the story of the wild children, the *besprizorni,* who were such a familiar feature of Russian life in the years just after the War. Homeless and father-

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in cellars among heaps of empty bottles. By 1923 they had become such a peril to society that the Soviets determined to "liquidate" them at any cost. Some of the older officials were in favor of jailing the whole lot of them . . . . A younger Communist, a certain Nikolai Sergeyev, puts through a plan of his own. He invites them to join a children's collective, an autonomous workers' republic to be ruled by the *besprizorni* themselves. When they discover that there are to be no guards or prison walls, and that the Soviets will furnish them with tools and raw materials, they set enthusiastically to work as carpenters, joiners, shoemakers—good Soviet citizens. The news of this experiment spreads to the city, and all the other *besprizorni* in their ragged hosts besiege the police station, asking to be accepted as members of the new collective.

There are, of course, attacks on the boys' republic by counter-revolutionaries, in this case represented by the fences and Fagins who used to profit from their thefts. These double-dyed, vodka-drinking, guitar-playing villains are the melodramatic element in the picture. But the really tremendous moment, for an American audience, is an episode in the lives of the boys themselves. The ice breaks up in spring; the roads are flooded; no raw materials can reach the collective; all the bandsaws, lathes and planes are silent; all the young carpenters and shoemakers wander about discontentedly, begging for work. Sergeyev goes to Moscow to see what can be done about it, leaving the boys to their own devices. During his absence they have an orgy, drink themselves into insanity, kill the collective dog, smash the collective windows, break vodka bottles over their own collective heads, and are kept from destroying the valuable machinery only by the efforts of Kolka and Mustapha, formerly known as the two worst boys in the city, but now transformed into collective heroes. At this moment Sergeyev returns. Sitting in the midst of universal disorder surrounded by two hundred half-grown boys with hangovers, he says exactly nothing. Instead he unwraps a parcel containing a toy railroad, which he assembles carefully on the floor. The train runs up and down the track; the boys look on delightedly; at last Sergeyev speaks: "We need a steady supply of raw materials. Boys, let's build a railroad."

There is something overwhelmingly simple in this remark, something close to the heart of everything one admires in the new Russia. "Boys," he says, "let's build a railroad." It is as if he were saying, "Let us plan, undertake, construct; let us reach the most difficult goal that can be attained by all of us working together." Everyone is captured by the boldness of his suggestion; the government furnishes the materials; the boys strip to the waist, take pick and shovel, go digging their way through spruce forests and swamps; finally, in a delirium of emotion, the first locomotive comes chugging into the new collective station. The spectators applaud, then shuffle toward the door, murmuring perhaps, "They do things that way in Russia." It is a long way from the plains of the Volga to those speakeasies near Forty-second Street where the members of this audience will soon be talking about the depression and who's going to be fired next week, and did you hear what happened to the girl that Bill met in Paris—and what do you think of Russia anyway?

CORRESPONDENCE

Dr. Clark's Book

SIR: In Mr. Reuben Oppenheimer's article, "The Deportation Terror," in your issue of January 13, 1932, there is a slight misstatement, doubtless a slip. Mr. Oppenheimer states that "Deportation of Aliens," by Dr. Jane Perry Clark, was published *after* the Wickersham Report on the same subject. The Wickersham Report bears the date of May 27, 1931, but was not issued publicly until over a month later. Dr. Clark's book was in the hands of the printer in March, 1931, and was published and on sale by its publishers, the Columbia University Press, the end of May.

New York City. MARIAN H. CHURCHILL.

SIR: The report of the National Commission on Law Observance and Enforcement on the deportation of aliens had been printed and finally approved before Dr. Clark's book was published, although the report was not released by the President until early in August, 1931.

Baltimore, Md. REUBEN OPPENHEIMER.

A New Hearing for the Griffin Bill

SIR: The question of denial of citizenship to aliens opposed to war is up again in Congress. Representative Anthony J. Griffin (N. Y.) has reintroduced his bill.

The Griffin Bill (H. R. 297) would amend the naturalization laws by providing that ". . . no person mentally, morally and otherwise qualified shall be debarred from citizenship by reason of his or her religious views or philosophical opinions with respect to the lawfulness of war as a means of settling international disputes, but every alien admitted to citizenship shall be subject to the same obligations as the native-born citizen."

This time progress has been swift. When this letter appears, the hearing scheduled for January 26 will have taken place before the House Committee on Immigration and Naturalization.

The next step rests with such advocates of freedom of conscience as readers of The New Republic. As national secretary of the Griffin Bill Committee, supported by an eminent list of sponsors, I appeal for the slight effort it takes to dash off a white-hot letter to your local congressmen. Urge them to press the House Committee for an early and favorable report!

ALFRED LIEF,
National Secretary of the Griffin Bill Committee.

New York City.

Strikers' Relief

SIR: Though ten million men and women are lashed by the whip of unemployment, today thousands of workers find conditions on the job so intolerable, employers so arbitrary, that to strike is their only recourse.

The Emergency Committee for the past year has been trying diligently to apply its funds in strike areas where the need was great. A total of $20,000, in addition to tons of clothing, was sent to the West Virginia Mine Workers, who fought a good fight, though a losing one. The gratitude of these still starving workers who struck out for life and independence is unbounded.

Frank Keeney, president of the West Virginia Mine Workers, tells us that the workers' spirit is high. They have been evicted from their homes, but live on in tents in the sleet and cold of the West Virginia mountains. The Emergency Committee continues to aid the miners in their organization with a monthly contribution.

The Emergency Committee now appeals to you to contribute to a General Strike Fund to be applied where the need is pressing. We shall continue to allocate funds with great care. Our overhead is very little beyond the cost of expressage of clothing to various strike areas and the cost of printing this appeal.

The misery of American workers is profound and widespread. When they strike, and as human beings they must, it is for us to give them bread. Please send your contribution at once to the Emergency Committee for Strikers' Relief, Room 1001, 112 East Nineteenth Street, New York City.

New York City. NORMAN THOMAS, Chairman.

From the Inventor of "Roadtown"

SIR: Russia is today the only country in the world where building is being done on a vast scale. In the U.S.S.R., not only are thousands of new buildings being constructed in old towns, but large numbers of new towns are being created in conformity with the Five Year Plan. One reads of expert city planners traveling over Siberia in a special train, leaving the ground plans of new communities behind them as they go.

What a tragedy it is that these new Russian cities are being laid out according to an archaic formula—a formula hideously wasteful of human energy, comfort and happiness. These towns are being built in the roughly circular form which we have inherited from the earliest villages of our prehistoric ancestors. But since the invention of rapid transit, there is no reason why towns should not be built on sound engineering principles—*along the line* instead of around a center. This new form, which is endorsed by the leading American city planners, engineers and social students, solves all the problems of congestion without creating new ones of its own. It saves untold sums of money. It gives the inhabitants all the real advantages found today in either city or country life, plus others which today exist nowhere.

No one who will spend five minutes studying this new plan can fail to be convinced that if the U.S.S.R. would erect just one of its numerous new cities in accordance with these ideas, it would never again make the mistake of planning a new community in the obsolete circular form. What a pity that it has thus far been impossible to bring the new idea to the Russians' attention in an adequate way.

EDGAR CHAMBLESS.

New York City.

Hays, Darrow and the Scottsboro Case

SIR: The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People has withdrawn from the Scottsboro case by vote of its board of directors, but there are certain implications and misunderstandings in the letter of Melvin P. Levy, in The New Republic of January 20, which I trust in fairness you will permit me to comment upon.

The withdrawal of Messrs. Clarence Darrow and Arthur Garfield Hays is termed by Mr. Levy as a "desertion of the Scottsboro boys." The facts are these:

Messrs. Darrow and Hays, though retained by the N.A.A.C.P., were perfectly willing to drop all organizational connection and to give their best services in the case provided the attorneys retained by the International Labor Defense would take the same action, which position was unequivocally approved by the N.A.A.C.P. Messrs. Darrow and Hays proposed that the attorneys sign a statement reading:

> We represent the defendants. We represent no organization. The lives of eight boys are at stake. It is unimportant who enlisted our interests. We will engage in no controversy between groups. We have agreed to work together to save these boys and our responsibility is to them and to them only.

The I.L.D. flatly refused this offer despite the fact that everyone knows that though an organization may retain attorneys, it is for the defendants themselves and them only that the attorneys appear. To have taken this broad, humanitarian stand, which is so typical of the careers of these two men, and then to be accused of diametrically opposite motives, as is done by Mr. Levy, is, to say the least, most unfair.

It is an ironic circumstance that Mr. Levy dares follow such an attack upon Messrs. Darrow and Hays with the naïve statement that "certainly we do not propose to desert the Scottsboro boys for factional reasons."

WALTER WHITE, Secretary,
National Association for the
Advancement of Colored People.

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A Drama of Mentality

Jean Jacques Rousseau, by Matthew Josephson. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. 546 pages. $5.

JEAN JACQUES ROUSSEAU was not a Frenchman; he was a Genevese. The fact is familiar enough but it has to be realized. He was a colonial who, after his family had been absent for five generations, returned to criticize the parent state. Imagine an American colonist, if you can, returning after the same length of time to perform the same service for Great Britain, and you will have a fair idea of the kind of interloper that Jean Jacques was in the kingdom of Louis XV. Even the leaders of Enlightenment, the Encyclopedists, could not receive the author of the "Discourse on Inequality" as one of themselves. It was this attitude of the Frenchman toward the barbarian which contributed so largely to his sufferings.

For this reason, if no other, Jean Jacques Rousseau belongs to the internationalists. He was the first Jacobin, the first Social Democrat, the father of both the French and the German Republics. Lonely, truculent, mad, inspired, he walked the earth as one of its pariahs and left a heritage to all.

Matthew Josephson's "Jean Jacques Rousseau" is not chivalrous. It is a great thing to write as freely as he does about such an agonized existence. There are so many things in Rousseau's character which crave our forgiveness that we are obliged to come to grips with the problem of him. To unravel his complexities and yet keep him human is a fine adventure for a writing man, and Mr. Josephson has ridden triumphantly through it. The real Rousseau, with the color of his eyes, the sound of his voice, his attitude at his desk, his night thoughts, his cringing, his pride, his sufferings, his boorishness, his charm, his divine intellect and his angelic eloquence—the real Rousseau, one is convinced, rises before us out of these high-hearted pages.

Rousseau's life reads like a novel by Thomas Wolfe, turbulent, perplexed, sorrowful. Thanks to his "Confessions," the facts are all given and, thanks to his biographer's superior insight, they fall into a coherent whole. The effect of a personality is undeniable. We don't have to excuse Rousseau's abandonment of his children. It is inexcusable. But we have to contemplate it steadily; we are not allowed to run away from it. The criminal is portrayed as delicately and as faithfully, with just the same dispassionate strokes, as is the social philosopher. Mr. Josephson has a flair for psychology as it becomes flesh; there is only one paragraph of generalization in the book.

Rousseau was, in part, an extraordinary boy who could not grow up. Perpetual youth was written in the contours of his face. His death mask, or rather the bust which Houdon made from it, shows that even to the end of his life his face was curiously unmarked and innocent. Everybody called him "Jean Jacques," until the street boys who crowded to see him in Paris did not know that he had any other name. The child in Rousseau existed side by side with the mature genius. His calf love at the age of forty-five is in some ways more difficult to accept than his abandonment of his children. Yet Mr. Josephson succeeds in portraying it with only a few touches of discreet humor. Indeed, it was nothing to laugh at. "The eighteenth century, from 1760 on"—that is, after Rousseau's romance with Sophie d'Houdetot—"belonged to Rousseau." He wrested it suddenly from Voltaire. —he says he did and Mr. Josephson inclines to believe him—she placed him securely among the gods of the Pantheon.

Rousseau's essential tragedy was his poverty. The loss of his parents was secondary. Besides, his father lived with him ten years after his mother's death and left him then not from choice. Perhaps the association was too close between the seasoned man and the delicate boy. They spent long nights together, reading until dawn, when Jean Jacques was only seven years old. He was apparently his father's consolation. It was after all the poverty of the miserable Saint Gervais quarter which poisoned his youth and darkened his life with a shadow that could never be eradicated. In spite of the undeniable opportunities that came to him, Rousseau remained poor, with a kind of stubborn and predestined poverty. He could never lift himself out of the working class. His wife was a laundress and illiterate. One of the world's great authors earned his living by copying, not only music and manuscripts but sometimes *his own works*.

All this titivated the public mightily. The rich ran after him, curious to see this second Diogenes. They believed him when he said that he preferred to be poor. The truth was that he could not help it. His mind was fatally grooved to that status. All his attempts to consort with gentry, beginning with his dead mother's relatives, ended in disaster. There is a bitterness in his phrase "Those Gentlemen," referring to the Encyclopedists, which goes back to his childhood hatred of the "upper town" in Geneva. The prophet of revolution was created in the huddled streets of the lower town. But he was no Diogenes. He was the first faint, faltering demonstration of what is known as class consciousness.

It is in his depiction of Rousseau's mental life that Matthew Josephson is at his best. This was Rousseau's actual life. Rousseau knew that himself. His own feelings and thoughts engrossed him from early boyhood. They form the bulk of his "Confessions" as well as the bulk of Mr. Josephson's book. We see his mental processes as clearly as we might see a party in a garden—moving about, grouping and regrouping themselves, having colors and other sensuous qualities—through the pages of this book. Mr. Josephson writes about abstract matters with unflagging vividness. He seldom resorts to scientific terms, but when he does they count. "Megalomania" and "paranoia" are not words to be flung about loosely, but how could a life of Rousseau be written without them? Mr. Josephson is to be congratulated on the judicious way in which he handles the morbid aspects of his subject.

The same is true of Rousseau's mysticism which, while in no sense morbid, could certainly be vague with less skillful handling. It is comprehended and given back by one who knows the taste of this kind of happiness. Poor Rousseau, always homesick for one thing or another, had one profound reverie which consoled him for everything. Like a smooth undercurrent it flowed steadily under his greatest agonies. He was never too hungry to be lifted to heaven by the sight of a lake, too guilty to be shrived by the sight of a green valley, too fevered to respond to the winsomeness of flowers. The love of beauty which awoke in the child of ten at Bossey became ultimately fixed in the hermit of Les Charmettes as his Religion of Nature.

Without it there would have been no Rousseau. It separated him by worlds from Grimm and Diderot. It separated him as completely from Thérèse Levasseur. "He would start off in many other directions, driven by neces- . . . but the idea of the 'natural

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life' would beckon him and pull at him wherever he was." He was, if such an office can be conceived, a priest of Beauty, that is, of Nature. His faith, whatever its contradictions, was a feeling which carried him through troubled waters and left him sane at the last.

Matthew Josephson has an easy, lucid style, without tricks; he uses words naturally but with effect. Bred in the classical tradition of Columbia University and France —not Paris, mind you—he reflects the great traditions of literature. His "Zola and His Time," an earlier study in French nationalism, has shown already his deep interest in the social question. He is young and sane and well equipped. How much more he is can be seen in what he brings to a subject like the madman Rousseau, about whom he writes with so much force, grace and inspired tenderness. KATHARINE ANTHONY.

Three Books by Aldous Huxley

Brave New World, by Aldous Huxley. New York: Doubleday, Doran and Company. $2.50.

WITH WAR in Asia, bankruptcy in Europe and starvation everywhere, what do you suppose Aldous Huxley is now worrying about? If you happen to have read an article he published about a year ago in The Virginia Quarterly Review, you will be able to guess. He is worrying about the unpleasantness of life in the utopia that, as he sees it, is just a century or two ahead.

"Brave New World" is, as one would expect, a somewhat amusing book; a bright man can do a good deal with two or three simple ideas. Mr. Huxley assumes that, six hundred years from now, mass-production methods have been perfected, Freudian psychology has triumphed, and certain biological experiments, notably in the field of ectogenesis, have born fruit. The result is a world in which reproduction is left to the laboratories and sex is made a game. People are rigorously divided into classes, and the members of each class are prepared in the test-tube and conditioned in childhood for the kind of life their class leads. Everybody is encouraged to consume as much as possible, everybody is made to believe he is happy, and prevented from doing any thinking on his own account.

For the sake of dramatic interest, Mr. Huxley introduces three rebels, two of them members of the ruling class, one restless because of physical shortcomings, the other because of intellectual superiority. The former brings to England the third rebel, who has been brought up in a New Mexican reservation for the segregation of unassimilated peoples. It is the savage, of course, who most rigorously resents the monotony and emptiness of life in the year 632 After Ford, and who most violently insists on the individual's right to suffer in order to develop his soul. Mr. Huxley arranges an interview between this savage and Controller Mustapha Mond, in which the gentlemen defend with considerable dialectic skill their respective theories of the meaning of life, the savage getting much the better of the argument. It is difficult to suppose that Mr. Huxley is really much concerned about God and romance and the beauty of motherhood, but he sees that there is something to be said for them, and the whole argument does show that after all human nature is human nature. Anyway, two of the rebels are sent to Ireland, and the savage commits suicide.

This is a pretty horrid picture Mr. Huxley paints, and we can be sure that any of us, after reading his book, will think twice before taking steps that might be a calamity. Perhaps we had better not do anything about social injustice or international anarchy. A quotation in the front of "Brave New World" points out that utopias are almost inevitable and that a day will come when intellectuals will dream of ways of avoiding utopias and returning to a society less "perfect" but freer. The better way, the book shows, is here and now to nip the utopias in the bud. After all, Mr. Huxley must have his chance to suffer and be brave.

Apparently we have been doing Mr. Huxley an injustice in thinking of him as a bored, cynical and generally rebellious young man. He is, on the contrary, quite well satisfied with life as it is. And why, when you stop to think of it, shouldn't he be? He has money, social position, talent, friends, prestige, and he is effectively insulated from the misery of the masses. Of course he demands the right to suffer bravely. Of course he wants something to worry about—even if he has to go a long, long way to find it. GRANVILLE HICKS.

The Cicadas, by Aldous Huxley. New York: Doubleday, Doran and Company. 63 pages. $2.

The World of Light, by Aldous Huxley. New York: Doubleday, Doran and Company. 104 pages. $2.

FOR ALDOUS HUXLEY, the writing of poetry is a kind of dreaming. His dreams are bad dreams—never nightmares—or fragments of nostalgia in pretty, pastel colors. The hard, concrete materials of his prose are generalized, blurred. Perhaps his attitude toward his poetry is one of undue reverence. One remembers his portrait of Rampion in "Point Counter Point." Rampion was an intelligent characterization in the same fashion that Huxley's poems are intelligent. Huxley respected Rampion and told us a number of facts about him, yet we were bored by Rampion. He was a straw hero. Contrast him with Burlap, a sanctimonious literary bounder. Burlap was alive and is likely to remain so.

Huxley cannot celebrate Rampion's virtues, nor can he celebrate with a free hand the nobility of an Anglo-Roman tradition in his poetry:

> Column-high in the blue air,
> Let the marble Caesars stand;
> Let the gods, who living were
> Romans, lift a golden hand.

This is gone, and since it is gone, pay your respects to the breeding locusts, the eternal cicadas:

> Clueless we go; but I have heard thy voice,
> Divine Unreason! harping in the leaves. . . .

The thing that Huxley loves is a dream of the past. Its moral structures are austere, secure, admirable. It has intellectual attributes comparable to the qualities of Huxley's own mind. Huxley realizes, perhaps more acutely than anyone living today, that merely to praise the past is futile self-indulgence. Better to praise, half-heartedly, ironically, the forces of "Divine Unreason," to be consistently negative and a trifle romantic. The dilemma, however, is endless, producing verse that we enjoy and quickly forget.

After reading the poems, Huxley's three-act comedy is a relief. He is awake and writing in a fresh medium. No more twilights, no more generalizations; he rediscovers his wit. Here is an English upper-middle-class drawing-room. It is Mr. Wenham's Household. Mr. Wenham is middle-aged, timid, impractical, evasive, hiding as best he can be-

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evasive, is quite conscious of his own weakness, but nevertheless he sidesteps a platonic love affair and marriage by running away. His fiancée, Enid, and his parents believe him dead; they turn for consolation to a medium, who does his work well, almost too well. Mr. Wenham writes a book about his talks with Hugo's spirit and the medium becomes Enid's lover. The medium, by far the most convincing character in the play, is another Burlap. It is a delight to watch Huxley's analysis of him, to see this subtle, complex and not too rare specimen wriggling on a pin.

Of course, nothing is settled. The results of the play are, as they should be, exactly zero. Moral values are struck sharply with a silver hammer and then left resounding in darkness. Huxley, by no means an inexpert showman, rings down the curtain. HORACE GREGORY.

Women in History

On Understanding Women, by Mary R. Beard. New York: Longmans, Green and Company. 532 pages. $3.50.

IN THE DAYS when militant feminism was "the thing," we talked a lot about "our man-made world," and blamed on it the political, social, intellectual—even a good many of the physical ills—to which we felt our female selves the unwilling heiresses. Mrs. Beard's book would have annoyed us. She is concerned not with "woman's shackles" but with her share in shaping such civilization as humanity has attained. From the prehistoric squaw—sowing grain, tanning skins, drying fish, devising clothes from fur or vegetable fibers—to the "strong and capable" woman of Soviet Russia, she shows how in each age women have helped to color and twist a strand in the vast pattern of effort and achievement. Mrs. Beard's quarrel is not with woman's share in the social, economic, political, artistic worlds, but with written history. She holds that this "chief source of knowledge about human affairs has abandoned the unity of life and neglected one-half the human beings that have made up the human world." Her thesis is this essential "unity of life":

> Around the economic man and the economic woman, around the biologic man and the biologic woman, there is a still vaster complex of life, art and aspiration, which must be mirrored in our minds if either sex or both together are to be understood.

Bringing to her task a vast and thoughtful knowledge of literature, sociology, economics, history, science, the arts, she has undertaken to write social history with the spotlight on the women who have played indispensable roles in its big scenes, rather than on their fathers, husbands, sons, brothers, lovers, in-laws, teachers, gods or confessors. She has the knack of flashing condensation. In a page or a paragraph she brings back some far-off seeress, woman warrior, mistress, scholar, poet, politician—Aspasia, Livia, Cornelia, Cleopatra, Hypatia, Matilda, St. Catherine, Olympias, Paula, Hildegard, Christine, Elizabeth, Catherine the Great, the salonières, Mary Wollstonecraft, Rosa Luxemburg—it is a long, long roll.

As story, or as history, this book is exciting reading; and it is, besides, a noble effort in the direction of that broader understanding—of life itself, of mankind's slow and faltering progress—which we so need in facing our troubled world today. Mrs. Beard's plea, finally, is not for women but for all of mankind, and for "the enduring belief that it is good to live, to love, to suffer and to labor."

Backing into War

Goose Steps to Peace, by Jonathan Mitchell. Boston Little, Brown and Company. 320 pages. $2.50.

MR. MITCHELL'S book is an excellent journalist (in the good sense) account of international pol tics since the Treaty of Versailles. Since his interest is peace, he has built his story around the great conferenc that were officially supposed to have peace as an objective Washington, Locarno, London and Geneva, with inc dental references to others. But unlike so many write who have undertaken this task, Mr. Mitchell is disi lusioned and well informed, and his book leaves the reade quite properly, with a sense that the War did not in an way improve international morality. The official peac conferences have been characterized by bickering and trad ing and maneuvering for advantage just as much as any o the pre-war conferences. The arras behind which th diplomatists operate has been redecorated. The activitie remain the same.

In Mr. Mitchell's opinion, the cause of this situatio is to be sought in the division of the world into national istic states. By their very nature these states are per manent barriers to peace. It is the duty of their servants the diplomats, to maintain the power already possessed enhance it if possible, aspire to gain control of more terri tory, and generally behave like greedy, tetchy, "difficult' children. The War did not eliminate nationalism. On th contrary, it increased the number of states, especially i Europe, and some of the new ones have been mor egregiously nationalistic than the old. The most difficul state, in Mr. Mitchell's opinion, is France; and his boo is in its total effect sufficiently anti-French to please th most ardent Francophobe.

Some of the items in the indictment of France shoul be listed here, for it is France that holds the destiny o Europe in her hands. At the Versailles Conference, Clem enceau began a campaign designed to wreck Germany en tirely and place France in an unassailable position. He di this in a forthright, vicious fashion that exhibited hin plainly as an entirely irresponsible old man anxious fo nothing except the crudest revenge. Though the more ex treme measures in Clemenceau's program were not realized sufficient was done to allow France to emerge as th greatest military power on the Continent. As such sh has since been a menace not only to Germany but also t England and Italy. She has pursued, moreover, a cours of diplomacy that has brought most of the new states o eastern Europe and the Balkans under her sway. When ever peace has come up for discussion, therefore, the effort of the French to maintain their power have wrecked an efforts on the part of others to move toward a true peace France has been a stumbling block difficult to get around It is only by gaining an advantage over her through dip lomatic manipulation that it will be possible to get some where near peace in Europe—and hence the world. Mr Mitchell is admirably world-conscious. He shows clearl how Far Eastern policy reacts upon the European situa tion. And what he shows is not subject for laughter.

It is, in fact, a pretty dismal world he presents. Ye somehow, it is possible for him to assume an optimistic tone in the concluding chapters of the book. He is sure that the masses of the people want peace, especially the American masses. He is convinced that the United States is in a sufficiently strategic position so that the American

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thus contribute to the permanent pacification of Europe. Indeed, he is so optimistic that he thinks, in spite of the terrific indictment of the nationalistic State he has drawn, that a peace by agreement and paper arrangement could be made did the proper spirit animate the diplomatists. This is so extraordinarily at variance with the conclusions any realistic person would draw from the historical sections of the book that one gapes in open-mouthed amazement.

But then Mr. Mitchell is a bit confused on one important point. He has not decided whether politics is one thing and economics another, or whether politics is merely an expression of economic forces as they find an outlet through the forms of government and diplomacy. The latter position, if consistently followed, would not detract from the interest of the story Mr. Mitchell has to tell, but it would make it less up-in-the-air; and the conclusion would emerge, as it seems to me it should from any study of contemporary diplomacy, that there can never be peace without a fundamental rearrangement of the economic system on which our nationalistic states are founded.

C. HARTLEY GRATTAN.

Through Foreign Spectacles

The English: Are They Human? by G. J. Renier. New York: Jonathan Cape and Harrison Smith. 304 pages. $2.50.

John Bull at Home, by Karl Silex. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. 293 pages. $2.50.

ENGLAND, of recent years, has not attracted quite so much attention from travelers, and for obvious reasons, as has America; but she has on the whole been more fortunate in the quality of the studies she has inspired. Dibelius and Siegfried both wrote interesting and valuable comments and here, in lighter vein than those, are two quite excellent portraits. Dr. Renier is a cultivated Dutchman, who has lived many years among us, and uses the English language a good deal better than most of us do. Karl Silex is a German newspaper correspondent whose impressions come to us through the medium of a translation.

Dr. Renier describes with acute wit the maladies of soul which distinguish the Englishman from the other types of that sick animal, the human being. He rightly finds that we English have made our dumb friends, the dogs, cats, horses and so forth, our dumb masters, and discovers that what endears the animals to us is their inarticulateness, which they have in common with us; for just as an animal talks only in a circus, so the Englishman talks only in the United States of America. Dr. Renier uses this trait as a probing stick into the sex life of the Englishman and traces its effect upon our law and politics. All of these things he does with an insouciance which will amuse the intelligent and pass over the head of the philistine. Americans of the school of Mencken will find that England seems to be very much like their own country, except in degree of verbosity. The cosmopolitan lover of good conversation will enjoy Dr. Renier because he writes with the irresponsibility that marks all good conversation.

Karl Silex comes down from the heights and actually descends to tell you not only what the Englishman eats, but what *you* can eat in England. His chapter on our amusements and upon the discomfort in which we are willing to live explains adequately why so many Englishmen try to find some other place than England in which to live. Just as Dr. Renier very wisely analyzes the devas-

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tating effects of the linguistic "h-barrier" dividing England into the educated classes and the h-less masses, so Mr. Silex calls attention to the amazing handicap of our worship of the amateur. The amateur is worthy of respect at least, but we have not failed to fall from due respect into absurd tolerance of amateurishness. Assuming, indeed, that both countries are really ruined, we might say that whereas America is ruined by professionalism, England is ruined by amateurishness. Mr. Silex studies amusingly the effects of this last and its gradual, half-hearted abandonment.

Both Dr. Renier and Mr. Silex are entitled to at least a glance from the omnivorous reader, and in both cases the initial glance is likely to develop into that eighteenth-century thing, a perusal. Moreover, their urbanity would serve as a useful model to other writers who may think of attempting a candid, witty commentary upon a foreign land.

JOHN LANGDON-DAVIES.

Book Notes

PUBLIC QUESTIONS

THE PENDULUM OF PROGRESS, by Sir George Young. *New Haven: Yale University Press. 184 pages. $3.*

This little book deals with Progress, Prosperity, Power and Peace: it is an honest, dispassionate attempt to lay our present political cards on the table. Its interest lies not so much in its conclusions as in the graphic methods the author has devised for presenting them: some of the diagrams are genuinely helpful, and even those that do not satisfy all the conditions of the problem prompt a more searching inquiry into them.

PHANTASTICA: Narcotic and Stimulating Drugs, Their Use and Abuse, by Lewis Lewin. *Translated by P. H. A. Wirth. New York: E. P. Dutton and Company. 335 pages. $3.75.*

The author, who can boast of a drug, Anhalonium Lewinii, named in his honor, here discusses the major drugs taken by people in search of heightened mental and physical effects ranging between "excitation and paralysis." In a semi-scientific manner he covers such questions as the geographical distribution of drugs, their desirable and undesirable effects, their chemical properties, the problems of habituation and cure. For his purposes, he classes the narcotic and stimulating drugs under five heads: euphorica, those producing primarily the sense of comfort, such as the opiates; phantastica, hallucinating substances, such as Indian hemp; inebriantia, such as alcohol and ether; hypnotica, the soporifics, such as veronal; and excitantia, such as caffeine. The division is only approximate; for instance, whereas cocaine does have euphoric properties, when taken in appreciable amounts it leads to a kind of nervous tension that is anything but comfortable and would require a "double entry" under the heading of both euphorica and excitantia. Drugs rival sex in the number of questionable generalizations about them that prevail even among scientific investigators—and Dr. Terry's specialized researches on the opium problem or Maier's work, "Der Kokainismus," may serve as admonitions against taking this comprehensive book too factually throughout—but in the main it is a good survey of all the major chemicals and plants by which man's dismal ingenuity has enabled him to obtain, at his own risk, effects safely to be sought only in the output of God's own drug factory, the endocrine glands.

THE TEMPO OF MODERN LIFE, by James Truslow Adams. *New York: Albert and Charles Boni. 344 pages. $3.*

Life and Emerson, biography, Henry Adams, history, Pollyanna in the guise of a goddess and liberty: these are among the subjects surveyed in this collection of essays. Being a historian, Mr. Adams has a sense of perspective which prevents him from exaggerating the significance of contemporary phenomena and helps him to integrate the diverse topics under consideration. On the other hand, the essays, despite the interest of the material, are not out examination, those values of Western culture which are sanctified by tradition. When he reaches the brink of discovery he tends to look back over his shoulder. Considering that the basic tenet of Mr. Adams' credo is faith in the "naked truth," one would prefer the author to qualify such observations as: "I doubt if we could have a better man than Hoover as a business engineer," and "but to despair of democracy is to despair of the fate of man."

FICTION

RABBI BURNS, by Aben Kandel. *New York: Covici-Friede. $2.50.*

This story of Jewish enterprise in Los Angeles is written with an unrelieved venom, and the central character, a disillusioned newspaper man, seems to labor under an emotion of disgust considerably out of proportion to any source given in the novel. It is hard to grow indignant over the success of a rabbi who becomes a publicity man for the motion pictures, particularly since religion is presented as having only a superficial appeal to its adherents. "Rabbi Burns" resembles many novels that touch on the movies and on the fatuities of publicity: the author seems to become gagged with his theme before the sources of his antagonism are conveyed.

THE SILVER EAGLE, by W. R. Burnett. *New York: The Dial Press. $2.*

In his most recent novel, Mr. Burnett enlarges his scene to include groups from Chicago's social and artistic life, as well as the customary figures of the underworld. Harworth's entry into what he considers respectable society coincides with his association with the gangsters, and the novel develops into a race—with marriage to the beautiful daughter of an old family as a reward for success, and destruction as a punishment for defeat. The story is exciting; Mr. Burnett arranges events artfully, bringing about Harworth's death at a moment when his triumph seems assured. But the chill of silence is on all the characters; the people cannot talk; and the great possibility of drama—the entry of Harworth's ominous companions into the circle of his wealthy friends—is not developed, although it suggests itself again and again.

Contributors

MICHAEL FARBMAN, editor of "Europa," a yearbook somewhat similar to The World Almanac, and author of "Piatiletka: The Story of the Five Year Plan." which was published in The New Republic Dollar Series, is a journalist specializing in economics, politics and finance.

STUART CHASE, whose various books on social and economic subjects hardly need an introduction to readers of The New Republic, is at present living in Connecticut.

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BEULAH AMIDON is an associate editor of The Survey and an occasional contributor of social and economic articles to other magazines.

C. HARTLEY GRATTAN, contributor to The American Mercury, Scribner's and other magazines, is the author, among other books, of "Bitter Bierce" and "Why We Fought." He was the editor of an anti-humanist symposium.

JOHN LANGDON-DAVIES, an English writer and lecturer on political and sociological subjects, is the author of "Man and His Universe" and of "Mankind Comes of Age," which Harper's is publishing this week.

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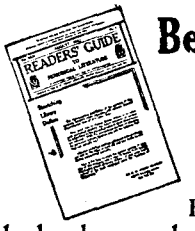

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